A CHILD'S BOOK OF HOLIDAY PLAYS

FRANCES GILLESPY WICKES

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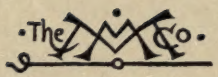

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A CHILD'S BOOK OF HOLIDAY PLAYS

BY

FRANCES GILLESPY WICKES

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ILLUSTRATED BY MARIE ABRAMS

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THIS BOOK IS FOR

ELIPHALET WICKES

AND ALL OTHER BOYS AND GIRLS

WHO LIKE TO ACT

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FOREWORD

These little plays are intended primarily for classroom use. They may be used as dramatic reading with the simplest stage setting, making use only of such scanty material as the classroom offers, or they may be given somewhat more elaborately as school performances with simple costumes and scenery. Directions for costumes and stage setting for each play are given at the back of the book.

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THE CAPTURED YEAR

THE CAPTURED YEAR

CHARACTERS

FATHER TIME
NEW YEAR
OLD YEAR
TWELVE MONTHS
HOURS
MINUTES (two or more as desired)
TWO EARTH CHILDREN
SANTA CLAUS

TIME: New Year's Eve.

PLACE: The Halls of Father Time.

In the center is the throne of Father Time. On one side are the Portals of the Future, on the other, the Portals of the Past, near the throne is the Portal of the Present. Father Time is seated on his throne; the Tenth Hour stands at the throne steps.

THE CAPTURED YEAR

FATHER TIME

Is all ready? Dear, dear, I think I'm getting old. I am always afraid something will be forgotten and this is *such* an important night. Tenth Hour, has the New Year come yet?

TENTH HOUR

I hear him coming now. . . .

A jingle of bells, the door opens and the New Year bursts in. . . .

NEW YEAR

Oh, how jolly! To think that I am going down to the earth to-night. How glad every one will be to see me and what a lark it will be!

FATHER TIME

These youngsters! They think everything is a lark. Now, young man, you have a great deal of hard work ahead of you. Don't forget that.

NEW YEAR

Oh, yes, I know that; but I shall have plenty of helpers. Are all the months here?

FATHER TIME

They are waiting behind the doors of the Future. But perhaps you would like to see them before you start.

NEW YEAR

All right, but don't let them take too long. I must get off. The whole world wants me.

FATHER TIME

Oh, yes, when the Eleventh Hour comes, then you'll have to scramble; but now, meet your helpers, child.

Father Time throws open the door. January comes in shaking the snow from his coat.

JANUARY

Glad to see you, New Year. Many a youngster have I introduced to the world. I have just been out to see that we have plenty of snow for our trip down, and to pack the new leaves and good resolutions in the sleigh. I have to take them, though they are not much used now-a-days. Then I've tied a baby blizzard to the back of the sleigh and put in some ice for the boys and some crisp winter days.

NEW YEAR

Good! I'm glad you are ready. I'm anxious to be off!

Enter February.

FEBRUARY

Ah, New Year, see what I have waiting for you! The first snow-drops! Before I leave you shall have whispers of spring and perhaps — for St. Valentine — the first twitter of a bird.

A great gust of wind blows open the door. March whirls in.

MARCH

Whew-ew-ew! How I will sweep Mother Nature's house and blow away all the rubbish! How I will rattle the windows and whistle down the chimneys. Then hurrah, I'll hurry away to sing in the treetops and fly over the ocean and blow spring home from the Southland!

April comes dancing in.

APRIL

Who calls? Who calls? Brother March, you are a gruff herald, but you always make the world ready for me. See what I've brought you, New Year.

New Year bends over; she makes as though to shower him from her watering pot.

Ha! ha! April fool! Never mind, New Year, April showers bring May flowers. Why, here's May now.

In comes May dancing and singing. She throws flowers upon New Year.

MAY

Oh, I wake the woods and flowers! I have singing birds and laughing brooks. It's a merry, merry, merry world!

APRIL

You are always glad, May. How do you manage it? Now I never know whether I shall laugh or cry.

MAY

Cheer up, April! Here comes June. She makes us all happy.

Enter June.

JUNE

Oh, you dear New Year! I could not carry half I wished to bring you. Here are roses — a whole world of roses and daisies and buttercups, strawberries and bird songs, and just outside is a bag of sweet June breezes and the dearest fleecy clouds you ever saw. I — Mercy, what's that?

A clatter and bang and opening notes of the Star-Spangled Banner, and July bursts in.

JULY

Hurrah for the Fourth! I have it with me — in my pocket I think! Besides that I've a real circus packed in my gripsack, and in my thermos bottle the best swimming pools known. Great invention, thermos bottles! They keep the water just right for swimming. Whoop la! School's over!

APRIL

July, you make my head ache!

JULY

Never mind, here comes August. She is quiet enough.

August enters.

AUGUST

I bring you breathless stillness of the noonday. Fields of ripening grain that lie silent in the summer sun. I bring you parching heat and shadow of the quiet forest. But don't look so serious, New Year. I bring ocean waves and forest trails and picnics for the children, and in my quiet I have prepared all the fruits that September has for you.

SEPTEMBER

Calling outside the door.

Help me in, somebody!

July and August run out and help September, who is carrying a great basket of fruit.

SEPTEMBER

Ah, New Year, I've good gifts for you this time and I saw October coming along the road laden with nuts and berries.

JULY

Hurrah! Here he comes!

October comes in with whirl of leaves.

OCTOBER

Build up the fire! My pockets are full of chestnuts to roast. What a dance I had with the leaves as I came along! Ah, here's New Year! Great times we'll have together, my boy, before sad November sends me back to the Halls of Father Time.

November walks in slowly.

NOVEMBER

Sad November! Why does every one call me that? I blow the leaves away and sing a

bit sadly, perhaps, but I bring rest and Harvest Home and Thanksgiving.

NEW YEAR

Cheer up, November. Thanksgiving is the best gift of the year except Christmas. Ah! and here's December now!

Enter December laden with holly greens, etc.

He stands for a moment in the doorway with hand raised as though in benediction. Then advances to center of stage.

DECEMBER

Peace, good will, and jollity. Ah, New Year, we will give them *such* a Christmas Day this year!

NEW YEAR

That we will — But hark, who else is coming?

Music is heard and in dance nine hours, — three morning, three noon, three evening. Tenth Hour joins them. They dance before Father Time and New Year.

FATHER TIME

These are the hours, New Year. They will serve you well. Now all are here except the Eleventh and Twelfth hours. The Eleventh must be helping Old Year on his way and the Twelfth will be at the door to let him in and to show you the way out.

The Eleventh Hour rushes in.

NEW YEAR

Who are you?

ELEVENTH HOUR

I'm the Eleventh Hour. But don't bother me now. It's all too dreadful! What *do* you think has happened? The Old Year has been captured!

ALL

In horror.

Captured! What *do* you mean?

ELEVENTH HOUR

The children have captured the Old Year.

ALL

The *children!*

ELEVENTH HOUR

Yes. You see, the Old Year has been giving them wonderful things! Sunshine and snow and ice. They have had skating and coasting and sleighing — everything that could make a glorious vacation. School will begin the second day of the New Year — almost as soon as he reaches the earth. So they decided not to let the Old Year go.

FATHER TIME

Absurd! Preposterous! Why, I've lived 1915 years that people count, to say nothing of 227, 496, 673 years that nobody mentions at all, and such a thing never happened before! It's perfectly ridiculous!

ELEVENTH HOUR

That's what I *told* them!

NEW YEAR

How did it happen?

ELEVENTH HOUR

I was coming down the road with the Old Year, quite in the regular fashion, when suddenly we were surrounded by children. They captured the Old Year and shut him up in the very fort he helped them build this afternoon. I sent for Jack Frost and the North Wind, but we couldn't get him out.

NEW YEAR

I must go right down to earth and see about this!

FATHER TIME

Worse and worse! That would never do. There have never before been two years at a time on earth and we couldn't begin such a thing now. It would be too confusing. No, you must wait till we find a way to release the Old Year! Oh dear! oh dear! What shall be done! It's awful! Preposterous!

NEW YEAR

Then some one must capture the children! I must get away.

FATHER TIME

That's the first sensible thing I've heard. Who shall go? There's no one but the Minutes. They might try.

Father Time rings bell. Minutes troop in. They dance continually.

NEW YEAR

Stand still, can't you?

MINUTES

Minutes never stand still. They go quickly! quickly! quickly! No one can ever catch a passing minute!

FATHER TIME

Well, listen, anyway! The Old Year has been captured. You must go to earth and

find the children who did it and bring them here *at once*.

MINUTES

We go, Father Time, quickly! quickly!

They dance out.

FATHER TIME

Walking up and down.

Dear! dear! This is dreadful! dreadful!

NEW YEAR

Nothing *could* be worse!

Door opens. Minutes dance in with two children.

MINUTES

We could not bring them all, but these two can tell you about everything.

They dance off.

FATHER TIME

What *is* the world coming to?

Sternly to children.

You must send back the Old Year *at* once.

FIRST CHILD

We shan't do anything of the sort. We like it better as it is.

SECOND CHILD

You see if we do, it just musses things up again. Unless the New Year would be *reasonable*. We might make a bargain. Of course if we had the planning of things, we could make it so much pleasanter and better for every one.

FATHER TIME

You could make things better!

FIRST CHILD

Oh, *so* much better! There are so many months that really are hardly any use at all, —

just for school and stuff like that. Now, if this New Year would only promise to leave all that out we would be very glad to see him.

SECOND CHILD

Yes, after Christmas holidays we could skip right over to July and start fishing and swimming. It would save lots of bother.

FEBRUARY

Do you mean to say you would leave me out? What about Lincoln's Birthday and Washington's Birthday and St. Valentine's Day?

FIRST CHILD

Regretfully.

You couldn't manage to come for just those three days, could you?

FEBRUARY

Indignantly.

Certainly *not!*

MARCH

And what about *me!*

SECOND CHILD

Oh, of course you are fun when you get to blowing things about, but it's all open to the same objection — we have to be indoors and at work.

APRIL

Weeping.

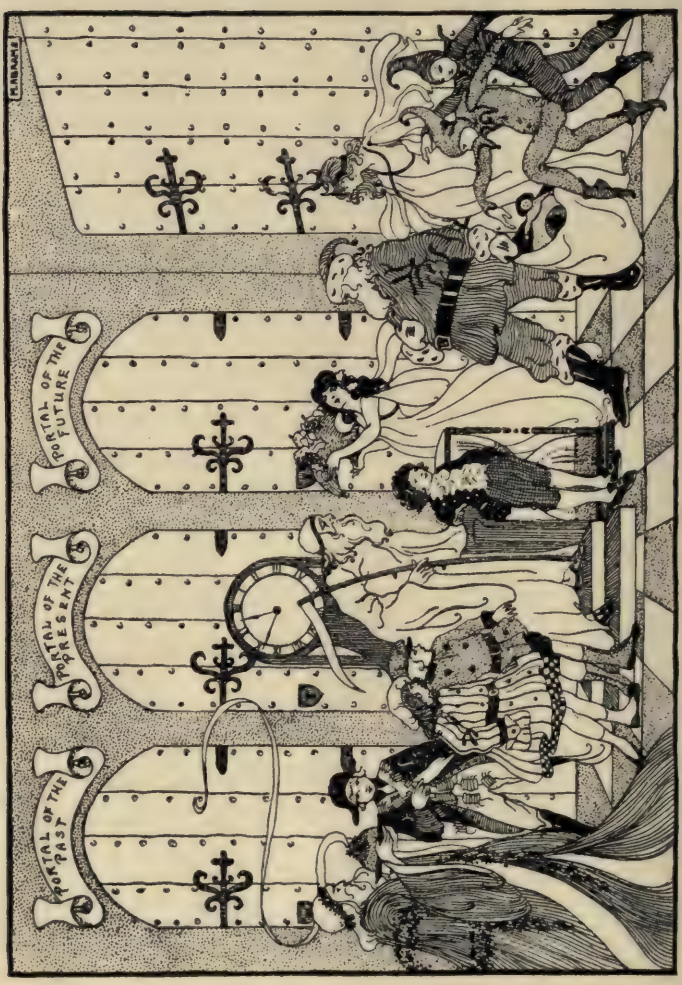
Oh dear! Oh dear! And I was feeling *so* happy a few minutes ago.

Eleventh Hour slips up to Father Time and whispers in his ear.

FATHER TIME

The very thing! Hurry, hurry! Send a few Seconds. They are the fastest things I know.

Eleventh Hour runs out. Children whisper together.



"Well, Father Time, that *was* a hurry call!"

FIRST CHILD

Firmly.

We are very sorry, but we have decided that unless the New Year will do as we ask we are going to keep the Old Year.

A great jingling of bells is heard outside and a deep voice calling, "Whoa! Whoa!" Then the door is flung open and Santa Claus bounds in.

SANTA CLAUS

Well, Father Time, that *was* a hurry call! What's the trouble?

FATHER TIME

These youngsters have captured the Old Year and they say they intend to keep him.

SANTA CLAUS

So! so! No more New Years? Well, that makes it easy for me. I shan't have to work any more. That means no more Christmas.

CHILDREN

No more Christmas!

SANTA CLAUS

Of course not. Christmas comes but once a year! We've had one already! If there is no New Year there is no Christmas!

SECOND CHILD

But we have decided to let the New Year come if he will do just a few little things that we ask.

ALL THE MONTHS

Such as February, March, April and May — Leave us out! January — Have Fourth of July the day after New Year's.

SANTA CLAUS

No, that won't do, either. I'm too old to change. I can't come except in the regular way. Besides, I have to take every month to do my work properly — it takes me eleven

months to get ready for Christmas — and just one month for vacation. No, the thing is settled. The good old times or no more Christmas.

FIRST CHILD

You wouldn't do that! Please, Mr. Santa Claus!

SANTA CLAUS

Make up your minds. I've just had an offer from the Snow Queen for my sleigh and reindeer; and if you are going to muddle things up this way, I'll close up here and get a comfortable little aëroplane and run up to Mars. I could make a nice little trip in a hundred years or so.

CHILDREN

Oh, *please*, *please* don't go to Mars!

SANTA CLAUS

Well, speak up, then. Is the Old Year to come back? If not, off I go.

FIRST CHILD

We never thought of anything like *this*. We will have to tell the other children.

SANTA CLAUS

All right. Run along. But unless you want me to start for Mars you want to have that Old Year here inside of four minutes and thirty-nine seconds!

Children run out.

SANTA CLAUS

Brace up, my boy. The Old Year will be here before you can say, "Jack Robinson." I tell you those youngsters were scared.

NEW YEAR

But I *must* get off. I *must* get off at once.

JANUARY

Hark, the bells are ringing out the Old Year.

Old Year runs in and drops down by fire.

OLD YEAR

Here I am at last. I thought I'd never get here. Those rascally children! They wanted me to stay. Ha, ha! Well, work is over. I'm glad to be home.

NEW YEAR

Hurrah! I'm off! Come, January! Good-by, everybody! My, but I'm a Happy New Year.

All rush to the door and wave good-by, shouting:

"A Happy New Year! A Happy New Year!"

THE LIGHT

THE LIGHT

CHARACTERS

AMERICA, the Mother
PEACE
INDUSTRY
LIBERTY
CHILDREN OF AMERICA
America's children from other lands.
ARAM, from Armenia
IVAN, from Russia
GRETCHEN, from Germany
ANNUNCIATA, from Italy
PATRICK, from Ireland
BORIS, from Poland
NILS, from Sweden
SAMBO, a colored child
ALFONSO, from Portugal
AN IMMIGRANT CHILD

PERIOD: The present.

TIME: Stormy evening of an autumn day.

PLACE: The hearth-room of America. Its window overlooks the harbor.

Gathered about the lighted hearth fire the Mother's children, each in the costume of his country, are busy at work. Aram is weaving on a simple hand loom. Gretchen is sewing, Annunciata making lace, Ivan fixing miner's lantern, Nils mending farm tools, Boris mending a violin, etc. The mother is helping the children with their work. She is robed in white and has a long blue cloak with red lining. Her long blue veil is fastened by a gold band with a star on the forehead. Peace stands near the window. Industry is setting the table. Liberty is mending the fire.

THE LIGHT

MOTHER

It grows dark. Look, Peace, my daughter, is the light in the harbor shining out over the water? It is a wild night for all who are abroad.

PEACE

Yes, Mother. I see the pathway of light stretching far across the darkness.

MOTHER

Draw the curtains wider, child, so that this light may show its welcome, too. (*Peace obeys*)

PEACE

Are new little brothers and sisters coming to-night?

MOTHER

I do not know, my child, but we must have light and welcome ready always. Industry, my daughter, are your loaves prepared? The children must eat when their tasks are done.

INDUSTRY

Yes, Mother, there is bread upon the table, and more for all who may come.

LIBERTY

Shall I build the fire higher, Mother?

MOTHER

Yes, Liberty, there is need of your fire to-night.

She bends over Aram, examining his weaving.

Ah, that is well done.

PEACE

I am so glad you came to be our little brother. How frightened you were at first, Aram!

ARAM

I did not know then that there was a place where I might work, and sing, and be happy. In my land every one quarreled, and snatched from one another. If we worked, the work of our hands was taken from us. I was afraid.

IVAN

I was afraid too. I came because I saw the light, and yet even while I came I wondered who would make me their slave in this new land, but I found home.

PEACE

Mother, may I take a cloak and go out to the shore? Some child may be there now in the storm. Ah, he would be cold and weary!

MOTHER

Do so, my daughter.

"WHERE AM I? WHO ARE YOU?"

Peace takes a cloak and goes to the door. On the threshold stands the Immigrant Child. He is ill-clad and frightened. As Peace steps forward he seems to fear a blow.

MOTHER

Fear not, dear child.

She draws the child in. The other children come forward in welcome.

IMMIGRANT CHILD

Where am I? Who are you?

MOTHER

This is your new home. Call me Mother.

IMMIGRANT CHILD

Who are these?

MOTHER

My other children who came to me as you have come.

IMMIGRANT CHILD

I followed the light. I saw it far across the water. It told me there was shelter here. So I journeyed over land and sea. Then I saw the light that shines from your window. I followed it and came here.

MOTHER

So did all these children. It is the light of Peace that shines from the window. It is the light of Peace that shines in the harbor, too.

IMMIGRANT CHILD

But who are you?

MOTHER

I am your Mother, America.

From every land children have come to me. The light of Peace shines always from my window, the fire of Liberty burns always on my hearth, the bread of Industry is always on my table — always and for all.

LIBERTY

Come nearer the fire.

INDUSTRY

Here is bread. When you are warmed you shall share our bread with us.

IMMIGRANT CHILD

Oh, what a lovely place! I shall never have to work again. Shall I?

MOTHER

Yes, indeed! We all work or else we should have no home. Do you not see that every one is busy? But you shall play as well as work. You shall eat and rest and play and work, too.

IVAN

He looks stupid. I shall tell him to choose my work and then make him do all the hard parts. He will think that he must.

MOTHER

Have you forgotten that when you came to us you had nothing. You chose your work and were patiently taught. Would you take from your brother what was given you so freely?

IVAN

I had forgotten. Forgive me, little brother.

IMMIGRANT CHILD

Where did you come from?

IVAN

I came from across the sea as you did. I came from Russia.

PATRICK

Au! I came from auld Irēland, 'tis a fine auld land too.

ANNUNCIATA

And I came from Italy — a land of sunny skies.

GRETCHEN

And I came from Germany.

BORIS

And I from Poland. Ah, I could not sing there, nor play my dear violin; but here I can make all the music that I will.

IMMIGRANT CHILD

Oh, I see!

Turning to children.

Then you are Russian, and you are Italian, and you are German, and you are Polish.

EACH CHILD

No! no! no! I am an *American!*

IMMIGRANT CHILD

What is an American?

ANNUNCIATA

Don't you understand? This is our home. America is our mother. This is her country, and she gives it to us all that we may all work together as brothers and sisters in peace and freedom and helpfulness.

IMMIGRANT CHILD

What do you do here?

NILS

I go out to the westward of my mother's broad acres. There are fields of waving grain, orchards, and gardens, and plains where cattle graze. There I work for our home and for America.

SAMBO

I work in the sunny southern gardens. There are cotton fields and orange groves.

ARAM

I work at the loom and shuttle. I weave cloth and make garments for my brothers.

IVAN

I go down under America's garden to where the coal and iron and gold lie hidden, and bring them up for America and my brothers. I carry America's light to the dark caverns of the earth.

Ivan holds up lump of gold. Immigrant Child snatches it and hides it in bosom.

IVAN

Darting at Immigrant Child.

Give it back!

Immigrant Child raises arm to strike.

PEACE

Give it back!

Immigrant Child hesitates. Peace stretches out her arm.

Give it back, *my brother!*

IMMIGRANT CHILD

Slowly hands back the gold.

But you said it was for us all.

PEACE

So it is for all — not for one. For you, too, when you do your share. First we will help you learn your work, and then as we give to you so you will give to us. We all must share, but we all must earn, too.

IMMIGRANT CHILD

I did not know. It sounds so strange! Have you all something to do and share? What do these others do?

ALPHONSO

I sail in the ships that carry these things to other lands.

BORIS

I study and dream. I teach my brothers what I have learned and help them to make their own dreams come true.

IMMIGRANT CHILD

Ah, what can I do? I have only done as I was bidden.

MOTHER

You will find your work. There is something for us all, and your brothers and sisters will help you. You will learn now that you are our brother.

IMMIGRANT CHILD

Yes, I will learn soon, but I am tired now.

MOTHER

Rest, my child, for a little.

ARAM

While he is resting, show him our great picture book, Mother.

ALL THE CHILDREN

Yes! yes! show him our great picture book and tell him the stories!

MOTHER

It is his picture book, too, now that he is one of us.

America draws back a screen, showing tableau of Pilgrims landing. As screen moves she says:

These are the first who came to me. They came because they wanted to worship in peace the God they loved. For this they left their own country and traveled far across the sea to build new homes in a wild land.

Second tableau: Washington on horseback.

IMMIGRANT CHILD

Who is that?

MOTHER

That is Washington. When men tried to take freedom and peace from the land, he drove them back and kept our home for us.

Third tableau: Lincoln with a group of colored children. A soldier in faded uniform stands by his side.

MOTHER

Once, even in my land, men made their brothers their slaves, but Lincoln made them free as God meant all his children to be, and men like this gave their lives gladly to keep liberty for their fellow-men.

Fourth tableau: Children grouped about a flag.

MOTHER

Our flag! Wherever this red, white and blue floats men are brothers with right to liberty and industry and peace.

Children all salute flag.

CHILDREN

I pledge allegiance to my flag, and to the republic for which it stands — one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

IMMIGRANT CHILD

I begin to understand. May I say it? I want to be an American, too.

Immigrant Child repeats the salute sentence by sentence. When he stumbles, the other children help him until he is perfect.

CHILDREN

Brother!

MOTHER

You are ours now, and this is your home.

IMMIGRANT CHILD

My home! I am America's child! Is the light in the harbor still burning? There are other children who will want to come to America.

AMERICA, THE MOTHER

It is burning. May we all remember that in our home there is room for all, and for all time we will keep burning the light of Peace.

ST. VALENTINE'S HOUSE

ST. VALENTINE'S HOUSE

CHARACTERS

ST. VALENTINE
ELVES
FAIRIES
IMPS
CHILD

TIME: The afternoon before St. Valentine's Day.

PLACE: Workroom in St. Valentine's house. (Tables are piled high with paper hearts, lace paper mottoes, etc. Walls are adorned with old-fashioned mottoes. Elves are working at long tables. St. Valentine is busily writing at his desk.)

ST. VALENTINE'S HOUSE

FIRST ELF

Just give me a thousand more of those hearts, please.

SECOND ELF

Oh, what will rhyme with heart beside dart and smart and part?

THIRD ELF

And give me something to rhyme with dove beside love.

ST. VALENTINE

Looking up.

Those are good enough, my dear. We've used them several hundred years and they have always given perfect satisfaction. Don't try to get new-fangled notions, my children. The good old words are best.

FOURTH ELF

The children always love them, that's true.

ST. VALENTINE

Other people love them beside the children. Yes, there's lots of room in the world for good old-time love. So work, children.

Elves, working, sing —

What are valentines made of?
What are valentines made of?
Laughter and gladness
But never of sadness,
That's what valentines are made of.

FIRST ELF

Sish! I hear a mortal footfall.

Door opens and child comes in.

CHILD

Oh! Oh! What a lovely place! I followed a dear little white pigeon and I have found the way to Fairyland.

FIRST ELF

This isn't Fairyland.

OTHER ELVES

Shish!

CHILD

Not Fairyland? What is it, then?

Runs to St. Valentine.

You will tell me.

ST. VALENTINE

It is *my* house. Can't you guess who I am?

CHILD

Not Santa Claus, for you have no fur-trimmed coat, nor reindeer.

Looks at him for a long time.

Oh! Oh! I know. You are St. Valentine. Our own dear St. Valentine!

ELVES

Of course he is our dear St. Valentine.

CHILD

And this is where valentines are made?

ST. VALENTINE

This is where they are put together. All the materials are made by children themselves.

CHILD

Oh, I am so glad I found my way here! Perhaps I might make a valentine. I want to send one very, very, very much. We haven't

a great deal of money so I cannot buy one. I should like so to give a valentine. I never have.

FIRST ELF

She has never given a valentine!

SECOND ELF

She *thinks* she has never given a valentine and she has been giving them every day. Aren't mortals stupid!

ST. VALENTINE

Tut! Tut! After all, it's better to give without knowing than to know without giving. Child, do you know what valentines are made of?

CHILD

Oh, yes! Gold and lace paper and beautiful flowers and —

ST. VALENTINE

Yes, yes. But do you know what these things really *are?*

"TELL OUR GUEST WHAT YOU BRING."

CHILD

I don't understand —

ELVES

May we show her?

ST. VALENTINE

It is really too early to call our messengers, but she has sent us so much material that I think we will.

Opens the window and rings little chime of bells.

Enter three fairies with baskets.

ST. VALENTINE

Welcome home! Tell our guest what you bring.

FIRST FLOWER FAIRY

Empties forget-me-nots from her basket.

These are gentle, grateful memories of the kindly deeds of last year.

ST. VALENTINE

Good! Good! What should we do for our forget-me-nots if people stopped remembering the kind things done for them!

SECOND FLOWER FAIRY

Pouring out buttercups.

Fairy gold! Fairy gold! The smiles and laughter of children. A splendid harvest to-day.

THIRD FLOWER FAIRY

Holding up red and yellow tulip.

Here are harlequin flowers — the jolly jokes that children have played.

She steps behind St. Valentine and throws flowers over him.

ST. VALENTINE

Ha! Ha! You'll play your jokes on me, will you?

Enter fairies with baskets of hearts.

FIRST HEART FAIRY

Here is every unselfish act that we have found to-day. There are one or two especially nice ones.

Sees child.

Why, the nicest of all came from *her*.

CHILD

From me! how could it?

FAIRY

Do you remember saving your gingernut for Johnny because he had none? That made a lovely red heart.

In run lace fairies with baskets and cobweb scarfs.

FIRST LACE FAIRY

We have had such a busy day! So many children were doing things that our shuttles fairly flew spinning their work into laces.

CHILD

Do the children really make the laces?

ST. VALENTINE

All the industrious, helpful acts are gathered by the fairies and on their shuttles woven into lacy patterns.

Suddenly there is a horrid din, blowing on combs, shrieking, etc. Fairies cower down.

CHILD

What is that?

VOICES OUTSIDE

A child! A child in Valentine land!

In rush four little imps with comic masks, etc. surrounding child.

FIRST IMP

Come to St. Valentine's house and we will teach you all the teasing tricks that valentines are made of.

ST. VALENTINE

Be gone!

SECOND IMP

Not until she has chosen. Every child may choose for herself.

CHILD

Oh, who are they?

FIRST IMP

Messengers of St. Valentine.

SECOND IMP

Gatherers of mischief and teasing words.

THIRD IMP

Gleaners of unkind thoughts.

FOURTH IMP

If you will come with us, we will show you how to make people seem ridiculous and foolish.

CHILD

But what good would that do?

FIRST IMP

It is such fun to make people feel silly.

SECOND IMP

Think of Sally. She teased you the other day. Wouldn't you like to make her angry?

THIRD IMP

We will make you such a lovely valentine that every one will laugh at her for days.

CHILD

Oh, I know you now. You are comic valentines. Please go away. I love our own St. Valentine.

Imps shriek and rush out.

ST. VALENTINE

Those fellows give me more trouble! And the worst of it is, some people think I send them.

They come from the false Sir Valentine who lives just across the way.

CHILD

Oh, why do you let him stay there and make such horrid valentines?

ST. VALENTINE

As long as the children send him material he will make valentines. We both use what the children send us. But come now, should you like a valentine all your own made of just such materials as you have sent us? Smiles and kind words and helpful acts?

CHILD

I should *love* it. May I look at them all?

Runs about the room. Stops at pile of dingy, crumpled valentines.

Ah, what are these?

FAIRY

Alas, these are the valentines that were received greedily and selfishly. They lost their

beauty and have come back to be brightened with a little love.

ST. VALENTINE

You must know, child, that there may be as great a blessing in the way you receive a gift as in the way you give it. These were lovely valentines but they went to the wrong persons.

CHILD

Oh, I am *so* sorry. See, this should be pretty.

Touches it softly.

You poor thing! Don't be sad, I love you. Why, it has grown bright again.

FAIRY

That is because your kind thought made it beautiful once more.

FAIRY

Would you like that one?

CHILD

I should like it so much! It is loveliest of all, and I did so want a pretty one. It is for Mother.

ST. VALENTINE

I think that you could find a prettier one. Look again. Remember it is to be your valentine to Mother.

The fairies crowd about her as she goes from table to table.

CHILD

Holding up another.

I think after all that Mother would like this one.

ST. VALENTINE

That is the very one I had in mind. Do you know why she would like it best?

CHILD

I don't know why — I just think she would.

ST. VALENTINE

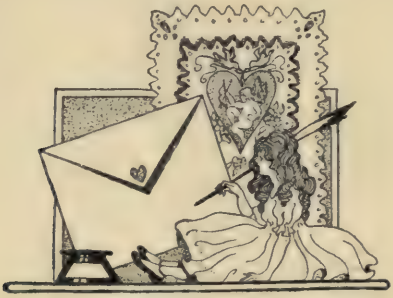
She will like it because it is made of the smiles you gave her when you ran on errands, and of the stitches you took when you helped her with the mending, and of all the little helpful acts at night when she was so tired. These make the best valentines a mother can have.

CHILD

And one can give real valentines every day in the year. Oh, I am so glad I came to St. Valentine's house!

As curtain falls elves sing:

What are valentines made of?



THE FIRST MAY BASKETS

THE FIRST MAY BASKETS

Scene I

Characters

SPRING
BUNNY
BIG BEAR
ROBIN
FOX
SQUIRREL

Time: Afternoon in April.

Place: The Forest.

THE FIRST MAY BASKETS

Prologue

(Spoken before the curtain by Stella the village child)

Something so sad has happened! I am afraid our Lady Spring has quite forgotten us. To-day I went into the woods and they were bleak and bare. No buds were breaking on the poor gray trees. Our violet bed was shivering in the snow. There was no sign of leaf, or bird, or flower. The little brook had forgotten how to sing. It

was so still I thought the world was dead. And then I heard a sobbing and a moan. The sad, sad South Wind was sighing for the Spring. I think our Spring will never come again.

Scene I

Spring runs in, laughing, and scattering flowers.

SPRING

Oh, it is so good to be back! My own dear woods! I thought I should never see you again. Every time I tried to come the North Wind drove me away. But yesterday I heard a child crying and I think I heard her calling me; so of course I had to come. No one could stay away when a child was crying! Then when I really came, the North Wind turned and ran. It was too funny. To think that all I had to do was just to stop being afraid, and come anyway. But how lonely the woods look! Where is every one?

Puts a little flute to her lips and blows a long clear note; a bird answers and a rabbit hops out.

BUNNY

Dear Lady Spring, we thought you had forgotten us!

SPRING

Oh, Bunny, I am so glad to see you! I have had a dreadful time thinking I could not get here just because that old North Wind blew so loud. Where is every one?

BUNNY

Where's every one in winter time? They all came trooping out to meet you, and then, when you did not come, they all trooped back again. It was so lonely without you. Big Bear vowed he'd sleep the whole year round unless you came. Two robins arrived on time, but they have been in a terrible flutter for fear they could never build a nest or raise a family. The squirrel's cupboard is empty and old Grandfather Squirrel is lean as a bone.

SPRING

I am so sorry, Bunny!

BUNNY

Even the children have gone. One watched and waited for you every day. Only yesterday I heard her crying in the woods, but now she too has gone.

SPRING

Softly.

Ah, that was what brought me back. There is no wind so loud that it can drown the crying of a child.

Laughing.

Oh, Bunny, I am *so* glad I came! Now we must wake every one.

She runs to a log and knocks.

Wake up, wake up, old sleepy head!

Voice, growling inside log.

What's that! What's that! G-r-r-r, how warm it grows! I smell nice warm earth! G-r-r-r. I smell honey!

A thumping and bumping inside log and Big Bear comes out.

BIG BEAR

Spring! Bless my soul, Spring! Well, you've been long enough in coming! G-r-r-r. I'm glad to see you.

Goes to Spring and gives her a bear hug.

SPRING

Oh, Big Bear, don't hug so hard! You will scare me away again!

BIG BEAR

Growling frightfully.

Then don't wait so long next time if you want us to treat you more gently! That hug has been growing ever since the time you should have been here!

Stretches his big paws.

My! I'm glad to be awake. Hello, Bunny! Where's everybody?

SPRING

They must be still asleep. I'll call them again.

Puts flute to her lips and plays a little tune. Out from the wood creatures — fox, other rabbits, etc. — dance about Spring. Spring dances in center of ring faster and faster until she throws herself down on the moss. The animals cluster about her.

SPRING

Isn't it jolly to be back! Now we are all here but the children. Where are the children? We want the children.

ANIMALS

Oh, yes! We want the children.

BUNNY

Dear Lady Spring, I am afraid they will not come again. Last time they hunted for you everywhere, and when they could not find you they said good-by to trees and brook and went

away so sadly. It was too cold and dreary in the woods for them.

SPRING

Just see the mischief I have done by being afraid of that old North Wind! We must have the children, though. Oh, I know what to do. One of you shall take a message to them so they will know that I am here. Big Bear, will you go?

BIG BEAR

Me? Bless my soul, if they saw me coming they would be so frightened they would never wait to hear what I had to say.

SPRING

I am afraid that is so. Robin, will you go?

ROBIN

I would go most gladly but my wife is already beginning our nest and I must help her every minute. Send the fox.

FOX

Licking his lips.

Oh, yes! I will go.

SPRING

Wait a minute. The road to the village goes past Farmer Brown's henhouse. I fear my message would never reach the children.

FOX

Why would you think such a thing of me?

SPRING

That is what comes of having a bad reputation. Squirrel, will you go?

SQUIRREL

Not I! Last time I went to the village a man tried to catch me. No, I like the children, but my treetop is the safest place for me.

BUNNY

I will go, Lady Spring!

SPRING

You are not afraid, Bunny?

BUNNY

Afraid? Not a bit of it! I will go at night when the menfolk are asleep, and if a dog sees me I'll lead him a pretty chase into a briar patch. It won't be the first time. But what will you send so that the children will understand?

SPRING

We will make some tiny baskets of the greenest moss that grows and fill them with the daintiest of spring flowers. That is a message every child can read.

FOX

How can you be sure that all the baskets go to children? What if a grown-up should find one first?

SPRING

He will not understand the message unless he has the heart of a child, and if he has that

heart, then he belongs to us and we to him. So the message cannot go astray. Now all to work.

They run to mossy bank, some shape baskets, some gather flowers.

ROBIN

Here is a wakerobin. They will all know that came from me.

SQUIRREL

Here are some acorns that have sprouted. There is no need to tell a child who sent those.

BIG BEAR

That is too dainty work for my big paws. But still I think there's something needful I can do.

He lumbers off and comes back with a birch bark basket with a bark strap.

There, hang that on Bunny's shoulders and pack it carefully with messages.

"NOW BRING ALL THE MESSAGES!"

SPRING

You dear old bear! It is exactly what we need. Now bring all the messages!

Animals bring moss baskets to Bunny, who packs them in big basket.

BUNNY

Packing basket.

Here's a marshmarigold, yellow as wee Molly's hair — I know where to leave that. This one with innocents, blue as a baby's eyes, must be for Baby Gretchen. The wakerobin is for Sandy who cared for the robin with the broken wing, and this with acorns for the boy who scattered nuts for the squirrels last winter. Here's a spring beauty for the child who cried for spring. Wise Lady Spring, how plain the message is for every child. Help me on with the basket; I must be off.

Scene II

CHARACTERS

VILLAGE CHILDREN

STELLA

MOLLY

SANDY

JIM

SPRING

WOOD CREATURES

DRYADS, and

FAIRIES

PLACE: Same as Scene I.

TIME: The next morning.

In the blossoming woods the animals, gathered about Spring, are waiting for the children.

Scene II

SPRING

Well, Bunny, did you tell them?

BUNNY

Yes, Lady Spring, I left a message at every house where there was a child.

SPRING

Listen, I hear music — music sweeter than the song of wind or brook or bird. I hear the children laughing.

ANIMALS

The children are coming! The children are coming!

SPRING

Hide, all of you!

They hide behind the trees. The children run in with their baskets, talking excitedly.

MOLLY

See! The footprints come all the way to the woods!

SANDY

I am sure that they are Bunny's footprints! He must have brought the baskets.

JIM

Robin is back, I know. Here is his own flower that calls him home.

STELLA

Do you not see? Our own dear Spring has come at last! 'Twas she who sent the message from the woods. Oh! see! those flowers and the breaking buds! The whole world has begun to laugh again! Oh, Spring has come! Spring has come!

Spring and the animals run out from their hiding. Children run to Spring, who joins hands with them and dances round in a ring.

SANDY

Our own dear Spring! When did you come?

MOLLY

Good Bunny, you came to tell us!

STELLA

Oh, I am so happy! I want to tell every one to come and find our own dear Spring. I will gather flowers for all who do not know that she is here. We'll take them to the village; for so many people never know that Spring has come. Then every year we'll send to all who may be lonely or afraid, a basket full of springtime and of love.

ANIMALS

She's found the magic charm!

SPRING

Come forth! Come forth! A little child has found love's way to fairyland and spring.

Spring puts flute to her lips and blows a soft note. From the woods troop dryads, pixies, and fairies who dance to the music of the Spring Song.

CURTAIN

BAUCIS AND PHILEMON

BAUCIS AND PHILEMON

Scene I

Characters

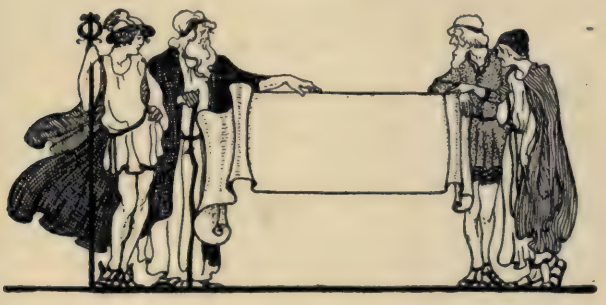
PHILEMON, a peasant
BAUCIS, his wife
MERCURY, JUPITER } gods, first disguised as travelers

Period: The days of ancient Greece.

Time: Late afternoon.

Place: A hut on the hillside. Baucis and Philemon on porch.

BAUCIS AND PHILEMON



BAUCIS

Philemon, do you hear the dogs barking again?

PHILEMON

Aye, and I hear the sound of shouting and of rude laughter.

BAUCIS

I fear another stranger has come to the village and that they are maltreating him. Oh,

would that the people could learn gentleness and kindness!

PHILEMON

See, there are two strangers coming up the hill.

BAUCIS

Go out and meet them, Philemon, and bid them welcome; for I fear they are in sore need of hospitality if they have passed through the village.

Two strangers enter. Philemon steps out to greet them.

PHILEMON

Welcome and good cheer, fair sirs. Will you not bide with us a little? I fear you have fared ill at the hands of yonder churls.

FIRST STRANGER

They are indeed a rude company. Was it ever their custom to greet the stranger with sticks and stones by way of bidding him be welcome?

BAUCIS

Alas, yes. So it has been for many years. Even the children are taught to stone the traveler and to set dogs upon the innocent wayfarer! Oft have we tried to win them from their evil ways, but they do but laugh at us and threaten us with the same treatment, an' we will not hold our peace. But sit you down, fair sirs. To this house be ever welcome.

SECOND STRANGER

Thank you, good dame. Could we perchance have a bit of supper here? Our welcome at the inn below did not fill our empty stomachs.

BAUCIS

All we have we offer you right gladly, but I fear 'tis little for such honorable lords. Had we known we should have the happiness of guests, we should have eaten more sparingly ourselves.

PHILEMON

Aye, that we would, but to such as we have you are more than welcome. Will you sit

here on the porch? 'Tis a pity to lose the golden light of the setting sun by shutting oneself indoors.

Philemon brings out old table, propping one leg up with a shell. Baucis sets it, placing on it brown loaf, pitcher, dish of honey, and another of ripe olives.

FIRST STRANGER

A supper fit for a king, indeed. Sit you with us, mine host, and you, good dame, and let us all sup together.

PHILEMON

Nay, we have but lately eaten.

To Baucis in a whisper.

I would that we had gone without our mid-day meal, there would have been more to offer our guests.

FIRST STRANGER

Nay, I insist. Good dame, I crave your pardon, but I shall rob your cupboard.

He goes in and after a moment reappears with two dishes and mugs.

BAUCIS

How lightly he moves — more as though his feet did fly rather than tread the earth.

PHILEMON

Yes, and did you note his strangely carved staff? Once as I looked I thought the serpents moved as though they were alive.

BAUCIS

'Tis indeed strange — I noticed it myself.

SECOND STRANGER

It is a peaceful spot that you have here — quiet as nightfall. Nothing is stirring but the busy wind.

BAUCIS

Listen, the trees are whispering. Many a night when evening falls and all the work is

done, I sit here listening to the soft voices of the trees. They are the gentlest, kindest of neighbors.

PHILEMON

Often I've thought that it would be a blessed thing to be a tree myself. Think of never hurting any one by thoughtless word or deed; of living but to bless, of giving shade to the weary traveler, comfort to the tired in heart, fruit to the hungry, shelter to man or to even the smallest bird. Surely there is no better friend than a tree.

BAUCIS

And how sweet it would be to feel the sun and rain, to understand the secrets of the wind, to watch the midnight sky and the first dawn, to whisper of all this to those who have an understanding heart. Yes, it must be beautiful to be a tree!

PHILEMON

I can never see a tree cut down without a pang. They seem like the brothers of mankind.

SECOND STRANGER

And so they are. In them dwell the gentlest, loveliest of spirits.

FIRST STRANGER

Ah, I am amazingly thirsty. Good Mother, Baucis, may I have a bit more milk?

BAUCIS

I fear, I greatly fear, there is but a drop more.

She lifts pitcher and pours.

FIRST STRANGER

A generous bowlful I should say. Now I will pour for you.

He fills all the bowls.

BAUCIS

My wits must have been wandering when I filled that pitcher. I had not thought there was so much milk.

SECOND STRANGER

Draining his bowl.

I crave your pardon but would ask another bowlful. The journey gives one a monstrous hunger and thirst.

PHILEMON

Pray take mine, I cannot drink it.

SECOND STRANGER

Nay, nay, I will pour for myself!

Pours into bowl.

FIRST STRANGER

And again I will have a cooling draught. We are greedy guests, but the fare is tempting.

Pours again.

Come, come, mine host, drink with us!

Philemon drinks, looks into the pitcher intently, slowly tips it up, slowly replaces pitcher,

then pushes back his bench and stands looking at strangers.

PHILEMON

No mortal guests are you! As I looked, behold, the empty pitcher filled itself.

BAUCIS

The loaf, too, grew again before my very eyes!

PHILEMON

Oh, wondrous guests, who are you?

Travelers rise, throw off cloaks, showing costumes of Jupiter and Mercury.

SECOND STRANGER

You speak the truth. We are not mortals, but gods. To such as you who meet us with a kindly welcome we bring blessing, but on those who turn us from their doors shall the curse come.

A sudden peal of thunder rolls. Baucis and Philemon fall on their knees and cling to each other. As it grows still Baucis points toward the village.

BAUCIS

Philemon, what has happened? I cannot see the village! Why, it is *gone!*

PHILEMON

Nothing is there but a lake. Oh, our poor neighbors, where are they?

FIRST STRANGER

Do not mourn for them. They were not fit to be called men. They were as cold-blooded as the fish that they have now become. Think of them no more, for the world is a better, happier place without them. Tell us rather how we may repay the hospitality that you have shown us.

PHILEMON

We are repaid by having had such guests.

SECOND STRANGER

Would you not like this hut to be a palace?

BAUCIS

Dear me, I should not know how to live in a palace! Our simple hut is better suited to us. Were we but able to set a meal before every hungry wayfarer and to give a bed to any weary wanderer who might come this way, that would be better than living in a palace.

SECOND STRANGER

So it shall be. Never shall the pitcher be empty nor your cupboard bare of food. Your generous giving shall be unstinted.

FIRST STRANGER

And have you no wish for yourselves?

Baucis and Philemon look intently at each other, then exclaim together and smile understandingly.

PHILEMON

If only we might be together all our lives and, when the gods call, might go together from this world; for we have always loved one another.

BAUCIS

Aye — that would be our wish.

FIRST STRANGER

It shall be so. Both the wish spoken now and that one which you all unconsciously asked before shall be remembered.

Scene II

Characters

MERCURY

A SATYR

THE DRYADS

The two persons to impersonate "voices" of Baucis and Philemon

Place: The same by moonlight. A satyr seated on a log blowing on pipes o' Pan. From behind the trees step Dryads dressed in pale green and leaf-crowned. They come from every tree except two in the foreground and dance to the music of the pipes. Suddenly Mercury appears in the center. The dance stops and Dryads cluster about Mercury.

MERCURY

Have you kept faithful watch over the two gentle souls who live within this hut?

DRYADS

We have. Each evening we have comforted them with quiet songs. Each night we have kept watch that nothing should disturb their peace.

MERCURY

Last time I passed this way they seemed scarcely older than that night many years ago when we came to them as weary wanderers and they gave us all they had.

DRYAD

So many travelers have come here since! Hardly a day has passed that they have not given rest and refreshment to some tired soul. I think it is the happiness of giving which keeps them so young.

ANOTHER DRYAD

Yet of late they seem to have grown weary. Often at night they are like two tired children.

MERCURY

I think the time has come for me to keep my promise.

He goes into the hut. First Dryad creeps to the window.

FIRST DRYAD

They sleep like two happy children smiling at pleasant dreams.

SECOND DRYAD

See, the kindly god has bent to whisper through their dreams.

In the treetop is heard a voice, "Baucis," answered from other tree, "Philemon."

FIRST DRYAD

The gods have called them and they have their wish. Their spirits have passed into these friendly trees.

"EACH NIGHT WE HAVE KEPT WATCH THAT NOTHING SHOULD DISTURB THEIR PEACE."

Voices from treetops again: "Baucis!" — "Philemon!"

FIRST TREE

The gods are good! We feel the sun and know the secrets of the wind.

SECOND TREE

The gods are good! We have our wish. We are together.

Softly like a sigh the voices repeat:
"Baucis!"
"Philemon!"
"Baucis!"
"Philemon!"

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A LITTLE PATRIOT

A LITTLE PATRIOT

Scene I

Characters

Elias Boudinot (afterward member of the Continental Congress)
Hannah Boudinot, his wife
Susan Boudinot, their daughter
Alisen, a friend of Susan
Roger, a neighbor's lad
Sally, a "bound out" maid

Time: A Morning in Late Summer, 1773.

Place: A Sitting Room in Elias Boudinot's Home. Mistress Boudinot is seated by the open window sewing. The voices of Susan and Alisen are heard in the garden singing "Pretty Peggy, Oh!" (or any other English ballad). As the verse is ended the two children enter. Susan has a basket of old-fashioned flowers. Both have garden shears.

A LITTLE PATRIOT

SUSAN

See, Mumsey dear, the larkspur has grown taller in the night; the Canterbury bells were all ringing in the wind; and I found the last rosebud down by the hedge!

MISTRESS BOUDINOT

It has all the sweetness of a midsummer day, Susan. I thank you, child. Bid Sally bring the tall vases for the posies and then come to your ruffling.

Susan goes to the door and calls Sally. Enter Sally with two tall vases.

MISTRESS BOUDINOT

Put the larkspur on the mantel, Susan, and, Sally, take the Canterbury bells to the dining-room. Then run down to Mistress Alston's shop and fetch me a package of raspberry leaves. Then, when you have prepared the vegetables for Martha, you may run and play for an hour.

SALLY

Bobbing a curtsy.

Yes, ma'am; thank you, ma'am!

SUSAN

Takes work-basket and sits near mother.

Now for the ruffling! May I have some of the little shell lace to edge it with, mother?

MISTRESS BOUDINOT

Nay, Susan, that lace came from England, and you know well that we can buy no more

English goods while the king puts any tax upon us.

ALISEN

Do not mind the lace, Susan. Hurry and finish. I promised mother I would finish my stint too. Let us see who can be done first. Then we will go down in the garden and make hollyhock ladies.

SUSAN

We will have a tea-party for them down by the sundial. May we, Mumsey? Oh, this thread! There is a knot!

The door bursts open and Sally rushes in, followed by Roger. Her dress is torn and her hair unbraided and tumbled.

SALLY

Oh, ma'am! The boys have chased me down the street and thrown sticks at me, and torn my dress!

MISTRESS BOUDINOT

'Tis a shame to treat a serving wench so! Roger, do you know aught of this?

ROGER

I tried to get her home safe, madam; but, indeed it was her own fault. She was found coming out of John Broadhead's store.

MISTRESS BOUDINOT

What does this mean, Sally? Have I not often told you that John Broadhead deals in taxed goods and that all patriots are forbidden to do commerce there?

SALLY

Please, ma'am, as I was coming from Mistress Alston's I saw a lady drop her basket and all her things rolled upon the ground. I gathered them up for her and she gave me a coin. Just before me was John Broadhead's shop with sweeties in the window, and I — I bought one, and —

She begins to sob.

MISTRESS BOUDINOT

Let this be a lesson to you! Should your master learn that you had entered a shop forbidden to patriots, I doubt not that he would have you smartly whipped, but I think that you have been fitly punished this time. Go to Martha and tell her to give you a cup of raspberry tea and let you rest and make yourself tidy before she sets you a task.

Sally bobs a curtsy and goes out.

Thank you, Roger, for bringing the child home.

ROGER

'Twas nothing, madam. I was coming here anyway, for Susan promised to make me a flag for our troop when her stint was finished.

SUSAN

'Twill not be finished soon, Roger. Mother says I must put it on the frock that I am to wear to Mistress Franklin's this afternoon. The governor's lady hath bidden me to tea, and so I must finish my frill.

ROGER

That's what you get for being a girl. Girls must have frills!

SUSAN

Nonsense! I like not company clothes nor those for whom I wear them!

MISTRESS BOUDINOT

For shame, child! 'Twas most gracious of the governor's lady to bid you wait upon her this afternoon, even though your father and I may not be present. I trust you will not forget the courtesy that is due to her nor to my old friend, Mistress Minturn.

ROGER

I would not give a fig for the governor's lady, nor for the governor himself. But yesterday he said 'twas only the rabble that had opposed his Most Gracious Majesty in his just measures of stamp acts and taxes. I wish Susan would not go there.

MISTRESS BOUDINOT

Nay, Roger, you forget yourself; though we mislike the governor's words, still we must not forget that he is in duty bound to support his Majesty, and for old friendship's sake we would keep at peace with his house.

ROGER

I ask your pardon, but I like it not. Why, next thing we know Susan will be drinking tea!

SUSAN

Oh, Roger! You know I would not do such a thing!

ALISEN

And why not, I pray? We drink tea at our house.

SUSAN

Oh, Alisen! How can you? Are you not a patriot?

ALISEN

I am a subject of our good King George the Third. My mother says 'tis folly to drink

brews of raspberry leaves and sage when good tea is to be had so easily with but a pittance of tax.

ROGER

A pittance, indeed! By what right does he tax us at all? He but hunts for ways to oppress us! Truly 'tis said, "The King is industrious as a beaver and obstinate as a mule."

ALISEN

A traitor's words!

ROGER

Better a traitor to a tyrant than to one's own land — like you tea drinkers.

ALISEN

Better —

MISTRESS BOUDINOT

Peace, children! There are troubles enough abroad without bringing them to the home.

Enter Elias Boudinot.

ELIAS BOUDINOT

Good words, indeed! Would this young firebrand stir up greater strife than is abroad already?

ROGER

Is there aught new, sir?

ELIAS BOUDINOT

'Tis the same story, my boy. Another letter has come from the Committee of Correspondence in Boston. The conduct of the British soldiers grows in insolence. Never, since the Boston massacre, has the feeling run so high. There are rumors of new taxes, and Samuel Adams calls on all good patriots to stand ready to support Boston as she is standing ready to support the rights of all the colonies.

ROGER

I wish I were in Boston!

ELIAS BOUDINOT

Patience, Roger. Opportunity cometh to him who standeth ready in his own place.

A drum and very squeaky fife are heard. Elias B. goes to the window.

It seems there are some young patriots drilling here. Is that some of your work, Roger?

ROGER

'Tis our troop, sir. I know we are but lads. Yet the time may come when we are needed. Susan has promised to make us a flag when she has finished her stint of ruffling.

ELIAS BOUDINOT

So, little daughter, you too would join the army of the patriots?

SUSAN

Oh, Father, if I were only a man and could do big things!

ELIAS BOUDINOT

Little things may have great results, Susan. There will be enough for us all to do in the times that I fear are at hand. Only remember, little

daughter, that if a time should come when you are called upon, be true, by word and deed, to the cause that belongs to us all — even to you children.

SUSAN

Yes, Father, I will remember.

(In the interval between Scenes I and II Roger drills his small troop in front of the curtain.)

Scene II

Characters

GOVERNOR FRANKLIN, Royal Governor of New Jersey

MISTRESS FRANKLIN, his wife

MISTRESS WINTHROP

MISTRESS CROTHERS

JONATHAN ENDICOTT

WILLIAM BRADFORD

SUSAN BOUDINOT

Time: Afternoon of the Same Day.

Place: Mistress Franklin's Drawing-room.

Before the curtain rises the notes of a minuet and the sound of voices are heard. As the curtain rises Mistress Winthrop and John Endicott are dancing a figure of the minuet. In the doorway stands Susan.

MISTRESS FRANKLIN

Most charming!

MISTRESS WINTHROP

'Tis the very latest figure, as it was danced at his Majesty's court last season, I do assure you.

MISTRESS CROTHERS

Ah, me, I fear we are sadly behind the merry world of London.

MISTRESS FRANKLIN

Why, Susan, child, come in and pay thy respects to thy mother's dear friend.

Susan curtsies low to both ladies and to the rest of the company.

MISTRESS WINTHROP

So this is Hannah's little maid! Come and sit beside me. How time flies! It seems but

yesterday that we played at dolls and stitched samplers together.

SUSAN

So my mother has oft told me, madam.

MISTRESS WINTHROP

I'll warrant she has! And of the plans we made to visit merry England ere she married a colonist. Wouldst like to come to England and see the good king, child?

SUSAN

I — I fear —

MISTRESS WINTHROP

Oh, speak up, child! I hope you are a loyal subject of the king.

A maid enters with the tea things.

MISTRESS FRANKLIN

Pouring tea.

Never mind, Susan, we will not press vexed questions when you would enjoy your cakes.

GOVERNOR

The traitorous spirit hath spread even among the children. One knows not where it will spring up next. Time was when Elias Boudinot was a loyal and zealous subject, but I fear he hath too many new friends in Boston of late.

JONATHAN ENDICOTT

'Tis time his Majesty taught these upstart rebels a sharp lesson. Permit me, madam.

He takes a cup and passes it.

MISTRESS WINTHROP

The time seems all awry when such a man as William Pitt will, in public speech, uphold treason and rebellion. Well I mind the day he said, "I rejoice that America has resisted. Three million people so dead to the feeling of liberty as to submit to be made slaves would have been fit instruments to make slaves of all the rest of us." All London hummed with that speech, I can tell you.

GOV. FRANKLIN

Yes, 'tis such as he that stirs up half our troubles. If there were but one firm mind in England, all this nonsense would soon be over.

MISTRESS WINTHROP

'Tis but a flash in the pan — a bit of swagger and bravado! Once the king really wills to stop it, the thing is done.

MR. ENDICOTT

The sooner done the better, say I. They will not use the stamp. They will not drink taxed tea! One would think, forsooth, that the king must ask their leave to govern his own kingdom!

GOV. FRANKLIN

The time has come for firmness and severity — not for pandering and argument. To think a beggarly colonist like James Otis dare bid the king rescind his measures or lose the colonies forever!

MISTRESS CROTHERS

Aye, but the king's soldiers gave him an argument for that! I hear his wits have been addled this twelvemonth from the drubbing they gave him.

MISTRESS FRANKLIN

A few more such wholesome arguments and all their fiery speeches will turn to smoke, I have no doubt. Come, child, drink your tea. Is it not sugared to your liking?

SUSAN

I thank you, madam, it is sugared.

She hesitates a moment, rises, crosses the room, pauses at the window, and then slowly empties the cup on the flowers below, and turns defiantly, facing the room.

GOV. FRANKLIN

Said I not the very babes breathed the spirit of rebellion?

"I THINK, LITTLE SUSAN, THAT YOU HAVE THIS DAY WATERED THAT RAREST OF FLOWERS — THE FLOWER OF LIBERTY!"

SUSAN

Not of rebellion, sire, but of independence.

The gentlemen laugh, except William Bradford, who sets down his cup.

WILLIAM BRADFORD

I think my own drink hath grown somewhat bitter.

MISTRESS FRANKLIN

It would be more fit, Susan, that thy courtesy equaled thine independence.

SUSAN

I could not drink it, madam, but I crave your pardon that I spilled it on your flowers! I — I have —

Her voice trembles, she pauses.

WILLIAM BRADFORD

I think, little Susan, that you have this day watered that rarest of flowers — the Flower of Liberty!

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THE GOBLIN STONE

THE GOBLIN STONE

CHARACTERS

ELEANOR	GOBLINS
BILLY	SPRITES
MOTHER	JACK O' LANTERN
SANDMAN	WILL O' THE WISP
	BLACK CAT

SCENE I: The Nursery.

TIME: Hallowe'en.

Billy and Eleanor are sitting up in bed, their mother is sitting on the edge of Eleanor's bed. The room is dimly lighted, a Jack o' Lantern is burning on a table by Billy's bed.

THE GOBLIN STONE

Scene I

MOTHER

And so every Hallowe'en the witches and hobgoblins dance on the moor.

ELEANOR

They never, never, come to children's homes, — do they, Mother?

MOTHER

Never! never! if they come even to the shadow of a home, puff! they are blown right back to Goblin Land!

BILLY

Tell us another Hallowe'en story, all about witches and black cats!

MOTHER

Not another one! The Sandman is coming! Here, blow out Jack o' Lantern. He wants to dance on the moor, to-night, and he can't unless you blow him out.

BILLY

One, two, three, blow! Good-by, Jack!

MOTHER

Good night, I know I hear the Sandman coming!

She kisses the children, tucks them in and goes out.

BILLY

Sitting up in bed.

Eleanor, I'm going to stay awake and see the goblins dance on the moor! When the Sandman comes I'm going to pretend to be asleep. I'll shut my eyes like this. Then he'll think I am asleep and won't put sand in them.

ELEANOR

Sleepily.

I'll shut mine, too.

The children lie very still. The door opens and the Sandman creeps in. He steals across the room, scattering sand on the children.

SANDMAN

In drowsy monotone.

Sand, sand, sand, sand o' sleep, sand o' dreams, hush! hush! hush! sleep! sleep! sleep, sand, sand, sand!

He glides softly away. The room is very still. Then a Jack o' Lantern bobs up at the window and down again. Billy pops up in bed.

BILLY

Hi! Eleanor, are you awake?

ELEANOR

I think so! Are you?

BILLY

Of course I am! Didn't I tell you I'd fool the Sandman? I say, Eleanor, let's get up and dress. I want to look out on the moor.

ELEANOR

But what would Mother say?

BILLY

Silly! That's just like a girl! It's Hallowe'en! People always do things differently on Hallowe'en.

He runs to the window.

Eleanor, the moonlight is jolly on the moor!

ELEANOR

Oh, Billy, please come back from the window! You know the witches and hobgoblins dance on the moor to-night, they might see you!

BILLY

Pooh! let 'em! Who's afraid of goblins! Hurry up, Eleanor! I say, I'm going out on the moor.

ELEANOR

Oh, no, Billy! Not on the moor on Hallow-e'en!

BILLY

Well then, get up and dress or I'll go out and find the goblins.

Eleanor tumbles out of bed, both children scramble into their clothes, talking all the time.

BILLY

Look! look! I'm sure I saw something move past the window! Let's climb down the

shed roof and run out. I think the moor is great at night! Come on!

ELEANOR

Oh, Billy, I couldn't! What would Mother say? And then — oh, I'd be afraid!

BILLY

A girl's no good at all. First you were afraid to get up and dress, and now you're afraid to go out on the moor. I tell you, it's just *jolly* on the moor!

ELEANOR

But not on Hallowe'en!

BILLY

All right, 'fraid cat! I'll go alone, but you needn't ask to ride my pony again, and *if the goblins do come I'll run off with them.* I think it would be larks to be a goblin.

ELEANOR

Oh, Brother, *don't* be a goblin. I'll — oh, I'll go with you.

BILLY

That's the stuff — sometimes you're almost as good as a boy. I'll take care of you.

Children begin to climb out window. Suddenly a me-ow is heard. Eleanor and Billy both tumble back in room.

ELEANOR

Oh, it's a witch's cat! I *know* it's a witch's cat.

BILLY

Growing bolder.

I'm going to see.

He looks out window.

Me-ow! Me-ow!

Both children jump. After a minute Billy looks out again and bursts out laughing.

BILLY

Why, it's only our old Tommy. Think of being afraid of *him!* I told you girls were silly. Come on!

ELEANOR

Must we go, Billy?

BILLY

Of course we must. Come on!

Children climb from window, jumping at every sound.

SCENE II: The Moor.
(Billy and Eleanor are alone on the moor.)

BILLY

Isn't this great! I told you there was nothing to be afraid of. I wish the goblins *would* come. I think they'd be fun.

A dull boom like single note on drum.

ELEANOR

What's that?

BILLY

Oh, nothing.

ELEANOR

I see a light! Oh, Billy!

Music begins slowly, bars of "In the halls of the Mountain King" from Peer Gynt Suite. Goblins dance out slowly, singing.

ELEANOR

I'm afraid.

BILLY

They aren't very nice near to — that's a fact.

GOBLINS

Song. Goblin dance and witch's spell,
Hallowe'en! Hallowe'en!
Ghost and spook and hooting owl,
Nothing else is seen!

GOBLINS

Ho! Ho! Here is something else to-night. Here are mortal children!

They dance in circle around children, singing.

"Goblin spell is dread and drear,
On Hallowe'en, on Hallowe'en!
Mortal children treading here
On earth no more are seen!"

ELEANOR

Oh, Billy, take me home!

BILLY

Yes, I think we'd best be going. We — we didn't mean to disturb you.

FIRST GOBLIN

Not so fast! Not so fast! At cockcrow we'll all be going! We'll go down to Goblin Land together.

ELEANOR

I don't want to go to Goblin Land. I want to go home.

BILLY

Yes, thank you, I think we'd rather go home.

FIRST GOBLIN

You should have thought of that before. On Hallowe'en everything on the moor belongs to the goblins.

ELEANOR

Yes, so Mother told us. Oh, dear! she said we would be safe at home.

FIRST GOBLIN

Oh, those mothers! Oh, those mothers! I've no patience with them. They are always telling children the wise thing to do, and if they obey we never get a chance at them. But now, Ho! Ho! we have two mortal children to work for us in our own Goblin Land!

ELEANOR

Oh, Billy, what is Goblin Land like?

GOBLINS

Dancing about them.

"Goblinland is grandly gray,
Dark and dim and dank and drear,

Cursed sunlight cannot stray
Where Goblins rule by spell and fear!"

BILLY

Will o' the Wisp, won't you help us?

WILL O' THE WISP

Ha! Ha! Help? Why, I love to get silly people into trouble, and you certainly are silly enough. Why did you come to Goblin Land if you don't like goblins? Ha! Ha! Ha!

A huge black cat bounds in.

CAT

Me-ow! Me-ow! My mistress bids me say that in one hour she will be here with all the witches of the air. Me-ow!

FIRST GOBLIN

Good! We will make ready for the revels!

CAT

Me-ow! Who are these?

FIRST GOBLIN

Mortal children, Cat, mortal children!

CAT

Me-ow! What are they good for? Do they taste like mouse?

FIRST GOBLIN

They are not to eat, Cat. We shall take them to Goblinland to be our servants.

BILLY

Look here, it isn't fair to take Eleanor. She didn't want to come. I made her. I told her I'd run away with the goblins if she didn't.

FIRST GOBLIN

Ho, Ho, Ho! and now the goblins will run away with *you* instead! No, no! we need her too. She can hunt in the dark caverns and

gather spider webs to mend our clothes, and cook toads and spiders for our supper.

CAT

Hark! some one is coming! Me-ow!

Jack o' Lantern dances in.

FIRST GOBLIN

We don't want them. They always side with the children!

JACK O' LANTERN

Whom have we here? Bless me! Why that's the very boy who made me!

BILLY

Why, you do look just like the Jack o' Lantern I made last year! See, Eleanor, his funny crooked mouth. Don't you remember how we laughed at it? But I supposed you were withered up long ago.

JACK O' LANTERN

Skipping about.

Ho! ho! ho! No! no! no! Every Jack o' Lantern made by a child comes to Lantern Land, and on Hallowe'en may dance on the moor. That's why we Jack o' Lanterns are friends of the children.

ELEANOR

If you are our friend, can't you help us to get away?

JACK O' LANTERN

Ssh! Wait and we'll see.

Aloud.

As I came by Bannock Burn the wee folks were all atrouping out for their revels.

CAT

As I came through the white birch wood the dryad folk were swinging in the tree tops ready for their revels.

"Why, you do look just like the Jack o' Lantern I made last year!"

JACK O' LANTERN

As I came by the brook the pixy folk were dancing on the brook shore ready for their revels.

GOBLINS

Ho! ho! We must make ready to clear the ground for the dance.

BLACK CAT

I'll keep an eye on the children.

He sits at edge of circle.

ELEANOR

Speaking to Jack o' Lantern.

Can't you help us get away?

JACK O' LANTERN

There's only one way *I* know of. You must find the Goblin Stone. It springs from no one knows where into the Goblin Ring on Hallowe'en, and he who finds it is the Goblin King for a twelvemonth.

BILLY

But I don't want to be a Goblin King.

JACK O' LANTERN

Of course not, but if you once hold the stone you have power over all Goblin Land and the goblins will do anything you ask to get it back again. That is, unless you ask the wrong thing.

BILLY

Tell me, so I will know.

JACK O' LANTERN

That's just what I can't do. You must choose for yourself or the stone will have no power.

ELEANOR

Dear Jacky, won't you help us find the Goblin Stone?

JACK O' LANTERN

I'd be glad to, but for it to be of any use you must find it for yourselves.

BILLY

Calls out loudly.

I say, if we have to stay here we might as well be of some use. Can't we help?

GOBLIN

Well spoken. If you behave like that you will find the goblins are good friends, and you shall come every Hallowe'en to dance on the moor. Come now, we will prepare the king's throne. But first we will make a magic circle that you may not pass.

Goblins dance in ring, dragging one toe so as to draw a ring around children. They dance from right to left.

"Mortal foot can never pass
Where the Goblin Ring is drawn.
Though it does not bend the grass,
Strong the circle binds till dawn."

FIRST GOBLIN

There, now you run out if you can. We won't touch you.

Children start to run but stop at edge of ring and run round.

GOBLINS

Ho! ho! ho! Now, Jacky, undo that circle if you can. We may work now and no fear.

Goblins bring in huge toadstool. Children help clear spot for it.

BILLY

He stands up, holding Eleanor by one hand, other hand above head.

The Goblin Stone! The Goblin Stone!

Goblins cluster round him, clutching at stone.

GOBLINS

Give us our stone! Give us our stone!

BILLY

First undo the magic circle.

GOBLINS

Dance again in circle, this time from left to right.

"Goblin ring shall melt away
Magic circle be undone,
Mortal footfall need not stay;
Spells be broken, every one."

Rush to children.

Now give us our stone!

BILLY

Not unless you promise to let us go home *at once!*

GOBLIN

Wait; only one can go, the one who holds the stone when the wish is made. Choose!

BILLY

Then I'll give the stone to Eleanor! Wish quickly, Eleanor!

JACK O' LANTERN

Hurrah! You choose rightly! The goblins cannot touch you now, for you used the wish for some one else. Throw the stone and run, both of you.

Billy throws the stone; the Goblins scramble; the children run.

SCENE III: Same as Scene I.

TIME: The Next Morning.
(The children are in bed asleep. Mother comes in and pushes the curtain wide open.)

MOTHER

Wake up, wake up! The sun has been up for hours!

The children stretch and jump out of bed.

BILLY

Why, we're home, Eleanor! We're home! Jack o' Lantern was right. We're home!

ELEANOR

Oh, Billy! the goblins have gone! We're home!

MOTHER

Why of course you are home. Where did you expect to be?

ELEANOR

Mother, we've been to Goblin Land, and if it had not been for Jack o' Lantern you would never, never have seen us again.

BILLY

But I know one thing, Mother, you are a very wise person, and we had better do as you say. The goblins said so themselves!

THE THANKFUL HEART

THE THANKFUL HEART

CHARACTERS

ELSIE, a lame girl

THE SPIRIT OF THANKSGIVING

THANKSGIVING CHILDREN:

HEBREW BOY	INDIAN BOY
GREEK MAID	BOB, THE FARMER'S BOY
ROMAN GIRL	MERCY, A PURITAN MAID

TIME: Thanksgiving Eve.

PLACE: A Cottage Room, which is both Kitchen and Living Room.

The room is poorly furnished. A stove with a tea kettle, a few chairs, a table with a coarse cloth, etc. Elsie, hobbling about on her crutch, is setting the table.

THE THANKFUL HEART

ELSIE

Now everything is ready except the toast. I shall not make that till mother comes. How pleased she will be to find everything ready, and bacon for supper, too! Three slices apiece! It's going to be a lovely Thanksgiving beginning with supper to-night. Mother can be home all day to-morrow. I can walk with my crutches and perhaps some day I can walk just on my own legs. I wonder if God is as good to every one as he is to us!

She picks up the kitten.

I'm thankful for you too, kitten! You are such a comfort. And you're thankful for me. Aren't you? I know you are because you purr so loudly. Now that everything is ready you and I will sit by the fire and pretend — what *shall* we pretend? Oh, I know! Let's pretend we are going to have a Thanksgiving party. Now sit up nicely, kitten, for it is almost time for the people to come. Did you hear some one knock? Why don't you say "Come in"?

A knock is heard.

ELSIE

Why, some one *did* knock. Oh, come in. We are so glad to see you! We were pretending a party but it is so much nicer to have real visitors.

Enter Spirit of Thanksgiving. She is dressed like a stalk of corn, bears a horn of plenty and a full-headed stalk of wheat for a wand.

ELSIE

Oh, I am *so* glad to see you. But I am afraid I don't quite know you. Please tell me who you are.

SPIRIT

I am the Spirit of Thanksgiving and you are one of my children.

ELSIE

One of your children! but I have never seen you before!

SPIRIT

That is not necessary. Every time you have been glad I have been near you and have whispered other happy thoughts to you as I do to all my children.

ELSIE

Have you many children?

SPIRIT

A very large family — all who have thankful hearts. Often my children have whispered

"I AM THE SPIRIT OF THANKSGIVING."

glad thoughts to you when you were alone. Now they are coming to your Thanksgiving party.

ELSIE

Oh! oh! shall I have a real party? How perfectly splendid!

Enter Hebrew boy, Greek boy, and Roman maid.

ELSIE

How nice of you to come! Oh, are you all Thanksgiving's children?

To Hebrew boy.

I know you, I think. You look like the Hebrew boy that I have been reading about in my Bible stories. How can you be Thanksgiving's child, for there were no Thanksgivings when you were in the world?

HEBREW BOY

No Thanksgivings? Why, we had a wonderful Thanksgiving a whole week long. We called

it the Feast of the Tabernacles but it was really a Thanksgiving feast. When the harvests were gathered in and all was ready for winter we went out into the woods and gathered boughs and every family made a tabernacle or tent of boughs to live in for all that week.

ELSIE

Oh, what fun! Did you do it just to camp out for a picnic?

HEBREW BOY

No, indeed! We did it so as to remind us of the time when our people had no houses but tents and no country that they could call their own. Then we thought of all that God had given us in our new land and we thanked him. There were feasts and merry-making, and what jolly times we children had in our tents of boughs!

ELSIE

It must have been fun for a week, but not for always. I am glad I don't have to live in a tent, especially in winter. There's another thing to be thankful for.

Turning to Greek maid.

Did you have a Thanksgiving, too?

GREEK MAID

Long ago, in sunny Greece, we kept our harvest feast and gave thanks to Demeter, goddess of earth's plenty, mother of the harvest. To her altar we brought ears of corn, baskets of fruit and a little pig. It was a wonderful day when we maidens might go with our mothers to Demeter's temple, for only the mothers of the land went up to the altar on that day. But afterward there was a great feast for all and dancing and merry-making. I remember well one day when I did not feel like dancing and left the other children and wandered into the fields. The whole world was so beautiful. I felt so grateful to the God of all — to some great spirit whom I did not know but who seemed greater and more kind than even Demeter.

SPIRIT OF THANKSGIVING

I remember, too. That was the day that you became one of my children.

ROMAN BOY

Did you feel that way? Why, so did I. Our Thanksgiving was very like yours. We too gave thanks to Demeter, but in our land we called her Ceres. She it was who blessed the fields, and on our day of thanks we all made merry in her name. Yet often I felt glad for so much more than food or harvest. I wanted to thank the God who gave us more than that.

ELSIE

I know. Sometimes it seems like such a lovely world — just because the sun shines and the sky's so blue and God seems just near by.

Another knock. Elsie goes to door. Enter Mercy.

ELSIE

Oh, I am so glad to see you. I am sure I know *you!*

MERCY

Yes, we have been friends for a long time. Ever since you first read about me. Even

before then I had often been near you, because you were always glad and I am so glad, too. But how strange it all looks here. We never had a room so fine as this. And what is it you call this?

Goes over to stove.

ELSIE

How funny of you to ask! Why, that's a stove, to warm the room and cook our dinner.

MERCY

Ah, like a fireplace. We had no stove to cook our Thanksgiving dinner, but we had a fine one, nevertheless.

ELSIE

Please tell me about it.

MERCY

How good the stove feels! I will come nearer while I tell you. We were hardly ever really warm except in summer time, for the winters

were bitterly cold. The first winter in the new land we nearly died of it. Ah, that was a weary time! Sometimes there was nothing in the house to eat and the great storms howled around and the snow piled against the windows. Then we gathered close about the great fireplace and piled on the logs. It made a fine blaze, I can tell you, but though our faces were nigh to burning, our backs would still be cold. Nor was there always enough firewood, — nor enough to cook over the fire.

ELSIE

Oh, I remember, you were often hungry. I have thought of that sometimes, when — well, when I've felt as though I might eat a *little* more if we had it. And then I have thought how glad I ought to be for all we had.

MERCY

Ah, but there were happy times, too. Many a merry night did we spend about the hearth telling stories of Old England. And never did we forget that God had brought us to the new land, and that he surely would care for us there.

Then, when the cruel winter had passed, everything grew brighter. We plowed and planted and God must have cared for every seed, for the harvest was wonderful.

ELSIE

I love to hear about that.

MERCY

What days we had gathering all the crops! No one was hungry then, I assure you, and when the Governor called a day of thanksgiving, how the children skipped about and made glad! Such a time we had peeling the carrots and turnips, seeding the raisins for the big puddings, cutting the pumpkins for the pies. The boys dug clams or went hunting. My brother shot a wild turkey. La! He was proud! No turkey ever puffed up so big as he. All the Indians were bidden to the feast and when they came they brought with them a deer that they had killed. What a feast it was — oysters, fish, wild turkey, Indian maize and barley bread, geese and ducks and venison, and then the pies and goodies!

ELSIE

Oh, but how could you eat them all?

MERCY

Not all at once, of course, but really we managed to eat a most amazing quantity. My mother said we grew two inches apiece that week. And how our hearts filled with thankfulness to God! There surely never was a better Thanksgiving than that first one in our own dear land.

The window opens softly and an Indian boy springs noiselessly into the room.

INDIAN BOY

Speaking to Spirit.

I heard your call far in the forest and so I came to this strange camp-fire of our little sister.

ELSIE

Oh, we are *glad* to see you. I never met a real Indian boy before. Do you really live in

the forest? Are you Hiawatha? Did you have a Thanksgiving, too?

SPIRIT OF THANKSGIVING

Laughing.

So many questions at once!

INDIAN BOY

I too am glad to see my sister. I am of the tribe of Hiawatha and I live in the deep forest where my tribe kept their Thanksgiving before my grandsire's grandsire was a stripling.

ELSIE

Another Thanksgiving day that I had never heard of! Won't you please tell us about it?

INDIAN BOY

Our old men have told the story many moons about our camp-fire. Once the stripling, Hiawatha, filled with love for all his people, wandered forth into the forest. There he fasted, waiting, praying. There he prayed

to the Great Spirit for a gift for all his people, that should keep the tribe from hunger when the braves came empty-handed. Then there came to him a warrior clad in garments green and yellow. On his head were nodding green plumes. Soft and swaying were his movements as of trees bent by breezes. Thus he spake to Hiawatha:

"I am sent you, Hiawatha, sent to you by the Great Spirit. Rise, oh, youth, and wrestle with me. For three nights we two shall wrestle. If you do not fear or falter you shall have the gift you pray for." Hiawatha, weak with fasting, rose and wrestled with the stranger. Three nights wrestled Hiawatha, till the stranger sank exhausted. "Hiawatha," cried the stranger, "strip from off me these fair garments; lay me gently in the soft earth, where the rain and sun fall on me. Guard the spot where I am sleeping; let no beast or bird come near me; let no weed or grass grow o'er me." All these things did Hiawatha. Long and patiently he waited, till green shoots came through the brown earth, green as was the stranger's mantle. High they grew in summer sunshine till they bore a

golden harvest. "'Tis the corn!" cried Hiawatha. "'Tis the food from the Great Spirit! 'Tis Mondamin, friend of Red Man!" Then each year, when the corn ripened, all my people met in gladness, kept a feast to the Great Spirit. 'Twas the feast of their Thanksgiving.

A sudden sound of stamping, the door bursts open and a small boy, Bob, rushes in.

BOB

Hello! I almost missed the party, and I *love* parties, but there's so much that's bully going on to-day.

ELSIE

Why, you're Bob, the farmer's boy. I see you every day. Are you one of Thanksgiving's family, too?

BOB

Sure I am. It's pretty jolly any time but a fellow'd be an awful muff not to be thankful at Thanksgivin' time. Why, I wish you could see our farm now. We began gettin' ready for

Thanksgivin' way back last Easter. The barn's full o' hay an' oats! The cellar's full o' apples an' turnips an' potatoes an' onions. The swing shelf's full o' preserves an' pickles an' doughnuts an' pies. Oh my, what a row of pies! The woodshed's full an' the wood-box is spillin' over. The storm windows are on and the big doors fastened up. Granny's rose bushes are all done up in straw comfortables. Yes, it's Thanksgivin' out our way, *sure*.

He looks at Elsie.

My, I wish you could see it!

ELSIE

I wish I could see every Thanksgiving that you have told about. They are all wonderful — I really feel as though I *had* seen them when you are all here.

Voices are heard singing.

"Come, ye thankful people, come,
Raise the song of harvest home," etc.

ELSIE

The choir are singing in the church.

During the singing the children group themselves about Elsie. As the song ends the Pilgrim child steps over to Elsie.

MERCY

See, she is asleep.

SPIRIT OF THANKSGIVING

Yes. We will steal away while the dream is yet with her.

MERCY

May we not leave her a gift?

SPIRIT

She does not need *our* aid.

ROMAN BOY

I wish she might have a little more comfort.

SPIRIT

Already she has the best gift that I could bestow, — the thankful heart.

Turning to Elsie.

Child of the thankful heart, be blest. For you every day shall be a Thanksgiving day and your own gladness shall draw to you all others who have grateful hearts. In their fellowship will come the things to make you still more glad. For every gladness shared makes gladness come again an hundred fold. Blessing, prosperity, and peace be with this house and ever may it hold — the Thankful Heart.

CURTAIN.

THE CHRISTMAS JEST

THE CHRISTMAS JEST

Scene I

Characters

THE KING
A LORD
THE FOOL

Time: Christmas Eve.

Place: A Room in the King's Palace.

THE CHRISTMAS JEST

Scene I

KING

I care not what you have done, only see to it that these Christmas revels show my great wealth and power. They say the people murmur. What right have they to murmur since I let them live? I, who could crush them utterly if it were my good pleasure. Let them see that I am great and powerful.

LORD

It shall be done, oh gracious King!

KING

Now leave me. Wait, send the Fool in. I sometimes think he is the only one in the palace who hath wits. He is the only one who does not weary me.

LORD

I go, your Majesty.

The lord goes out, the Jester dances in, ringing his bells.

KING

I sometimes wish I were a fool. I would have naught to do but jest and grin and shake my bells.

FOOL

Be of good courage, King; the case may not be past curing. Ofttimes one is a fool without knowing it.

KING

Peace! I am in no mood for folly. I am sick of court revels. I am weary, I tell you, weary of it all. I am a King. Do you hear, Fool? I am a King, and yet I have no pleasure in it.

FOOL

It seems at times your Majesty hath wisdom as well as riches, yet they go not amiably together.

KING

Fool, where go you nightly when you quit our presence?

FOOL

Where goes the candle-flame when the breath which is its life quits it — out.

KING

I hear you have been seen creeping through the palace garden at the early dawn. Where go you when your silly antics at the court are done?

FOOL

Up and down, and in and out. Folly goeth everywhere, your Majesty, in low places as well as high.

KING

Nay, but you go where you find a pleasure that I, your King, know not. I see it in your face when you forget to grimace and to grin. Listen, and hear my will. Fool, for this Christmas Eve we will change places, you shall be the king, I will be the fool.

FOOL

It will tax my stupidity to the utmost, yet will I try. But does your Majesty really think that he hath wit to be a fool?

KING

Jest no more, saucy varlet. Tell me where would you go to-night an' you were still the fool?

FOOL

Dropping his saucy air and speaking with dignity.

Oh, King, even your fool has a life beyond your ken — a life that is his own. Before I answer, pledge your sacred word no harm shall come to any through this jest — if jest indeed it prove.

KING

Solemnly.

Fool, I pledge my sacred word as king.

FOOL

Perhaps 'tis best! I, the fool, know not.

Yes, your Majesty, I will do as you command. To-night when courtly revels all were done, and I was once more a man — not a mere fool — I would have gone to the hut of the Widow Brandreth. 'Tis on the outskirts of the town, close by the dank, foul marsh. There are many pens (houses if you will) that huddle there. Seek out the poorest. It is hers.

KING

A strange place you choose, Fool, for your merry making. Yet I will go. Now get thee gone, but seek my chamber in the early eventide.

Fool goes out.

KING

Now I shall know what the Fool hath that I, the King, have not.

Scene II

Characters

DAME BRANDRETH
GEOFFREY
THE KING
AN OLD WOMAN
TWO BEGGARS

Time: A Few Hours later on Christmas Eve.

Place: Dame Brandreth's Hut. A poor, squalid room, dimly lighted, and warmed only by a feeble ember burning on the hearth. On a bed made of straw and sacks lies Geoffrey, a cripple child.

Scene II

GEOFFREY

Think you that he will surely come to-night?

DAME BRANDRETH

Aye, he will come, but he must wait until the palace revels all are done, and that may be till dawn. Sleep now, or shall I light the Christmas taper?

GEOFFREY

Nay, keep it till he comes. It is such a little candle that it will burn but a moment. When we hear his knock we will light it quickly so that he may find Christmas cheer waiting him.

DAME BRANDRETH

Are you cold?

GEOFFREY

Only a little. There is no wind to-night. It is like a Christmas gift to have it still. One can be almost warm when the wind does not whistle through the cracks.

DAME BRANDRETH

Thou wouldst find a Christmas gift in anything — yet 'tis indeed a mercy not to shiver on the blessed night.

A knock is heard at the door and a faint jingling of bells.

GEOFFREY

Light the candle! Quick! He comes!

Dame Brandreth brings out a tiny end of candle, lights it at the ember, and goes to the door. There stands the King dressed as the Jester and masked.

GEOFFREY

Christmas greeting! Christmas greeting! It is truly Christmas now that thou art come!

DAME BRANDRETH

Aye, comfort and cheer come always with thee.

GEOFFREY

See, we have a Christmas taper. The good John found it thrown out on a rubbish pile

and brought it to me. I saved it till you came. Does it not make a glorious light? A real Christmas glow?

KING

Call you that little thing a Christmas glow?

GEOFFREY

Mother, hear his gruff voice and see his funny mask. It is another Christmas jest. Oh, but I am glad that you are come! Come close to me and tell me the tale you promised.

KING

What tale? I have forgot.

GEOFFREY

Why, the tale of Christmas love. You said it should be the merriest, gladdest, most beautiful tale that I had ever heard.

KING

I have forgotten it.

GEOFFREY

Hear him, mother. He would speak in that gruff voice and make us think he had forgotten us.

A knock on the door.

Hark, some one comes!

Dame Brandreth goes to the door. There stands a man, gaunt and in rags. He turns, gives a low whistle and calls, "He has come! He has come!" Several more poor, ragged figures crowd in. An old woman runs up to the King.

OLD WOMAN

A blessing on thine head! ah, I know well who put the food inside our door, and the warm blanket. Without it the child would have died.

MAN

Aye, and the food and fuel that lay upon my doorstep. We might all die like pigs forgotten in an empty sty, but for thee.

KING

Do all men, prince or pauper, come but to be fed?

OLD WOMAN

To child.

Tell me, how didst thou like thy Christmas gift? I knew the secret for I saw him hiding it near the house for thy Christmas surprise.

GEOFFREY

What gift? His coming is the best Christmas gift that I could have. Oh, the hours are so long when we wait for you! Come tell us a tale. Tell us about a fairyland ruled by a king as kind, and good, and generous as thou.

DAME BRANDRETH

A king! Speak not of kings! The memory of such a king as ours gives thoughts not fit for this blessed eve.

FIRST BEGGAR

The King! May a black blight rest upon him!

SECOND BEGGAR

Aye, may he eat the bread of bitterness. Sorrow and misery walk through the land, and he sits eating and drinking and making merry!

KING

Perchance he knows not —

FIRST BEGGAR

Thou defendest him ever. I tell thee if it were not for thy pleading we would have burned the castle before now. Why should he feast while we starve?

GEOFFREY

Oh, it is Christmas Eve! Let us forget such dreadful things. We have our dear, dear Fool who loves us!

MAN

Heaven bless him!

GEOFFREY

Come near to me, dear Fool.

King goes to him.

Ah, thou art good, so good! When I am a man I would be like thee, giving life and joy and comfort to all who suffer. Dear Fool! Now tell us of the Christmas love.

KING

Nay, I have another tale to tell to-night. The King hath turned me from the palace. I am poor as one of you. I have no more to give. What say you now?

GEOFFREY

Thou shalt have our hut.

FIRST MAN

I will go bring the food and fuel. It will last thee for a little.

OLD WOMAN

We will work our fingers to the bone, but thou shalt be fed.

SECOND MAN

We will tear down the palace! The whole city would serve thee!

KING

Why, they love the man! not what he gives! Is this what the Fool found?

He covers his face with his hands.

GEOFFREY

Weep not, weep not. We love you, dear Fool.

KING

Starting up suddenly.

I was but jesting, hear the truth. I have a message for you. The King bids you come to-night to the revels at the palace.

All laugh with scorn.

FIRST MAN

Aye, an' think you the guards would let us in? We would be fine guests for the King.

KING

Nay, it is true! I am come to bring you. See, here is the King's ring. He bade me show it to the guards that they would let us enter.

He holds up a great ruby ring. The people look at it in amazement, then he hands it to one of them. They pass it about with cries of, "See how it glows! 'Tis worth a fortune! Aye, that it is!" Geoffrey takes it.

GEOFFREY

It is wonderful! Yes, it must be the King's own royal ring!

FIRST MAN

Nay, but we will not go. We fear and hate the King!

KING

But if I beg, because you are my friends?

MAN

Aye, we would follow thee to death itself. Naught have I but my life, but I would gladly give thee that.

OTHERS

And I! And I!

KING

Come then! Child, I will carry thee myself. Now for the Yule-tide revels and the Christmas cheer!

SCENE III: The revels at the King's Palace.

CHARACTERS

KING	OTHER BEGGARS
FOOL	LORDS
GEOFFREY	LADIES of court, etc.

There are sounds of shouting, cheering, and singing. As the curtain goes up they are bringing in the Yule-log, singing —

"Come bring with a noise,
My merry, merry boys,
The Christmas log to the firing."

The Fool, dressed as King, sits on the throne above the crowd. As the revelers reach the hearth the door is thrown open and the real king, still dressed as a jester, comes in with his friends, the beggars. A lord steps forward to stop them.

Scene III

LORD

What means this, Sirrah? We have had enough of your antics. Get hence quickly, or you shall taste the whip.

FOOL

Wait! I would speak with him. Why come you hither with this strange company?

KING

Oh, Christmas King, because this is the night of largesse and of royal bounty, I have brought hither my friends. They crave no gift but what is given freely. Give, oh, King!

GEOFFREY

Nay, King! we came not for gifts. We came because thou didst send the Fool to fetch us, and if he did ask we would follow him to the world's end.

BEGGARS

Aye, that we would.

KING

Nevertheless, your Majesty, I pray you give them of your bounty. Oh, King, I do beseech you, give quickly and give freely.

FOOL

Yea, I will give. I will give them whatever thou dost ask. Therefore choose thou their Christmas gift.

KING

I would give them a thousand broad acres of the royal land whereon might be set homes — not hovels. I would give the right to labor in the King's forest and to receive bread for their labor.

FOOL

This do I give, as the King's bounty at this blessed Christmastide.

BEGGARS

Oh, King, we give thee thanks.

KING

Once more I crave thy goodness. What wilt thou give to me, oh, Christmas King? What wilt thou give to one who is, and knows himself to be — a *fool?*

FOOL

To thee I give the Christmas gift of love.

GEOFFREY

But all men love him now!

KING

Child, could you love the King as you do love the fool?

GEOFFREY

But the King is great and rich, and powerful. He does not want love.

KING

Pulls off the mask and pushes back the motley cap.

"I AM YOUR KING, WHO ASKS THE CHRISTMAS GIFT OF LOVE."

I am your King, who asks the Christmas gift of love; and here I pledge to give to you as freely as you give to me.

GEOFFREY

Are you indeed the King? I thought the King was cruel and unkind. Why, I could love you easily. You have carried me in your arms.

PEOPLE

Long live the King!

FIRST BEGGAR

And long live the Fool!

KING

Aye, long live the fool who teacheth wisdom!

GEOFFREY

Why, thou hast told the fairy tale thyself, good King!

KING

And we will tell the tale anew each Christmastide. My people and my children, let us all be glad! Fool! thou art still the Christmas King to-night. On with the revels! Hail, thrice hail to Christmastide and Christmas love!

SUGGESTIONS FOR STAGING

SUGGESTIONS FOR STAGING

THE CAPTURED YEAR

The walls of the room may be hung with white. There are three entrances; over the doorway near the center is written in gold letters, "Portal of the Present," over the door at the left "Portal of the Past," over the one at the right "Portal of the Future." The throne of Father Time is at the center of the back of the stage. A high-backed armchair covered with red (plush or canton flannel) makes an excellent throne. It should be raised quite high above the stage. A large, stout packing box may be used for the platform, with smaller boxes for the throne steps; these should also be covered with red. A large hourglass is on one arm of the chair; at the other side is a scythe.

COSTUMES

FATHER TIME. A robe of white loosely girded, white hair and long white beard. As the curtain rises he is seated on his throne with one hand on his scythe, and the other holding the hourglass.

THE NEW YEAR. Tight little coat with ruffled skirt, knee breeches, buckled shoes.

THE OLD YEAR. Robe of brown, long brown cloak, white hair and beard.

The Months

JANUARY. A big fur coat sprinkled with cotton snow, a fur cap trimmed with glass icicles. His beard glitters with particles of artificial snow.

FEBRUARY. A white cloak with tiny touches of green. He has a bunch of snowdrops.

MARCH. A coat of brown cut in "shreds" which he whirls as though the wind were blowing him about. A brown cap with long shreds as a tassle.

APRIL. A dress of pale green bordered with daffodils. She wears a jester's cap of green and yellow and carries a watering-pot.

MAY. A robe of pale blue, a wreath of wild forget-me-nots.

JUNE. A dress of pale pink with an overskirt of a little deeper pink. The overskirt she has gathered up in her hand. It is filled with roses and daisies.

JULY. A soldier suit and cocked hat, firecrackers hung about his neck. In one hand he holds a bulging grip-sack from which protrude toy circus animals.

AUGUST. Dress of pale yellow with water lilies; carries a sheaf of corn.

SEPTEMBER. Dress of purple and green, with garlands of grapes.

OCTOBER. Suit of brown and red like autumn leaves.

NOVEMBER. Hung with harvest vegetables; carries a pumpkin.

DECEMBER. Dressed as Father Christmas. Long cloak trimmed with snow, holly crown; carries a plum-pudding and a wand tipped with a star.

The Hours

(Each carries a triangle on which she strikes the hour as she enters.)

First Three, flowing robes of gray and pale pink shading to deeper.

Fourth and Fifth, in blue robes.

Sixth, dressed in brilliant noontide yellow.

Seventh and Eighth, in paler yellow.

Ninth, in lavender.

Tenth, deeper lavender, with crescent moon in hair.

Eleventh, deep purple, or black, with stars.

Minutes, tight elf suits of gold.

Seconds, tight elf suits of orange.

Earth Children. Any ordinary out-of-door clothes.

Santa. Regular Santa Claus costume.

THE LIGHT

The walls of the room may be made of screens hung with cheesecloth. At the right side of the back is a window. This can be made by building a framework of boards and stretching canvas over it. In this is cut a square the size of a window. Curtains half drawn in front of this. Near the window and in front of it stands a table with a large lamp, whose light shines out through the window. Left of the center back is the fireplace round which the children are gathered. It may be made of packing boxes with a board across the top; it is covered with gray crêpe paper, marked to represent stones. To the left is a cupboard.

COSTUMES

AMERICA. A white robe, a long mantle of blue with red lining, a long blue veil fastened by a gold band with a star on the forehead.

PEACE. A simple white dress falling in straight, full folds; a wreath of olive leaves.

LIBERTY. A dress of red girdled with gold, a Liberty cap.

INDUSTRY. A dress of blue similar in line to the one worn by Peace.

IMMIGRANT CHILD. A torn robe and ragged cloak of any dull color; head and feet are bare.

The other children wear peasant costumes of their own countries.

ST. VALENTINE'S HOUSE

This play calls for no special stage setting. Either plain walls or screens hung with white may serve as a background. There should be a frieze of hearts and cupids; below this hang old-fashioned mottoes, such as,

"The rose is red, the violet blue,
Sugar is sweet and so are you," etc.

In the center of the back sits St. Valentine at a low desk. He faces the audience. The elves' long work tables are placed at each side of the room.

COSTUMES

ST. VALENTINE. A white robe and long brown mantle with border of hearts. He has white hair and beard.

ELVES. Tight elf suits of brown with a red heart in front and one in the back. Pointed red caps with a little bell at the tip.

FAIRIES. Dresses of crêpe paper cut like flower petals, light blue for forget-me-not, yellow for buttercup, red and yellow for tulip. Little flower caps of crêpe paper. Crêpe paper wings.

LACE FAIRIES. Any lacy white dresses, caps of lace paper.

IMPS. Tight black suits, ugly false faces; they carry horns.

CHILD. Any plain everyday clothes.

THE FIRST MAY BASKETS

This play is intended to be given out of doors, in which case it needs no stage setting of our devising. If it is given indoors, the same directions may be used as for "Baucis and Philemon," except that the hut is omitted, and instead Big Bear's log is introduced. This may be made of two barrels joined together and covered with bark or brown cloth.

COSTUMES

These may be simply suggested, as a tight cap with rabbit ears may indicate Bunny, or they may be somewhat elaborated.

SPRING. A dress of pale green cheesecloth with garlands of delicate flowers, flower wreath, sandals.

BUNNY. A suit of white canton flannel, rabbit cap, and little cotton-batting tail. (A sleeping garment with feet serves excellently for the body of the costume.)

BIG BEAR. A bear suit of brown canton flannel. (Or a bear rug, cap and gloves.)

FOX. A tan canton flannel suit, foxskin fastened on head and hanging down back.

SQUIRREL A very small child dressed in gray woolly sweater and leggings; a large gray tail (fur if possible) wired to curve over back.

ROBIN. A black cap with yellow beak, black coat with long pointed sleeves like wings, red waistcoat.

DRYADS. Green cheesecloth robes that hang in soft folds, girdles and wreaths of leaves.

FAIRIES. Dresses of cheesecloth of pale tints; they have wings.

CHILDREN. Ordinary children's clothes.

BAUCIS AND PHILEMON

This play is intended to be given out of doors among the trees. The only scenery needed is the outside of a little hut. This may be constructed of screens covered with bark, or rough brown cloth. The hut should be near two trees. In the second scene two persons should be hidden in the trees to impersonate the voices of Baucis and Philemon. If the play be given indoors, the wall should be hung with green and leafy boughs. Baucis and Philemon may be hidden behind boughs, for the second scene, or they may be wound in rough brown cloth like tree trunks and hold the boughs above their heads.

COSTUMES

BAUCIS and PHILEMON wear simple Greek peasant costumes, Baucis of dull blue, Philemon of brown.

When MERCURY and JUPITER first appear they are wrapped in long cloaks. Afterward Mercury wears short white tunic, winged sandals and winged helmet.

JUPITER, a long Greek robe girded with gold, sandals.

A LITTLE PATRIOT

The stage for this little play may be very easily arranged as both scenes are colonial interiors which can be suggested very simply. Each child can probably contribute an old-fashioned table or chair, or an old print for the walls. Mistress Franklin's drawing-room should have an air of more formal elegance than the living room in Elias Boudinot's house. If possible an old silver tea service and old-fashioned china should be borrowed for the second scene. Suggestions for making a window were given in the directions for "The Light."

COSTUMES

ELIAS BOUDINOT. Buff coat and knee breeches, ruffled shirt, colonial hat.

MISTRESS BOUDINOT. A dress of dull blue with darker blue overdress.

SUSAN and ALISEN. Simple little colonial dresses of sprigged muslin.

SALLY. A dress of dull drab, worn and shabby.

ROGER. Short jacket, knee breeches, ruffled shirt.

MISTRESS FRANKLIN, MISTRESS WINTHROP, MISTRESS CROTHERS. Underskirts of plain color, gay chintz overdresses (if genuine old gowns of silk or brocade are

obtainable they will have a charming effect, but cambric and chintz make a very good substitute).

GOVERNOR FRANKLIN, JONATHAN ENDICOTT, WILLIAM BRADFORD. Colored coats and knee breeches, ruffled shirts, buckled shoes.

In the second scene Susan wears a gown fashioned like those of the ladies.

THE GOBLIN STONE

It is not necessary to have more than one set of scenery for this little play. The background for the whole may be a set of screens covered in rough gray. In the first scene these serve as the walls of the nursery. Their bareness may be broken by a few bright pictures. A window should be cut in the rear screen (the cut part may be folded back so it can be easily replaced for the second scene). A step-ladder should be placed outside the window so that the top step forms the sill. The children can climb from their nursery chair on to this and so escape without destroying the nursery walls. Only very simple furniture is needed.

In the second scene the gray walls form the misty background of the moor. The ground may be covered with gray-green cambric raised in places over boxes to represent rocks and hummocks. A plant or two may peep over these rocks, but the whole effect should be dull and barren. Dim lights and a yellow lantern moon will add to the effect.

COSTUMES

ELEANOR and BILLY wear ordinary children's clothes.

GOBLINS. Tight goblin suits of brown, high pointed caps.

WILL O' THE WISPS. Dark green suits and pale yellow caps. They carry lanterns which they move constantly. (The cap and lantern may serve as costume with ordinary suits.)

CAT. Suit of black canton flannel with cat mask.

JACK O' LANTERN. Tight green suit like stem. A pumpkin lantern over the head.

THE THANKFUL HEART

The scene is a bare kitchen room. It is neat and cheery in spite of its poverty. The table has a red and white cloth, the stove is highly polished, the kettle shining. There is a red geranium in a pot. On the wall are pinned a few cheap colored pictures. Elsie is as cheerful as the room.

COSTUMES

ELSIE. A patched and faded dress and stiffly starched pinafore. She walks with a crutch.

THE SPIRIT OF THANKSGIVING. Dressed like an ear of corn, in green and yellow. She is crowned with a garland of grapes, and carries a horn of plenty, overflowing with harvest fruits.

HEBREW BOY. A simple flowing costume which may be copied from a picture in any book of Bible stories.

GREEK MAID. Simple Greek robe of pale blue, sandals, Greek band across hair.

ROMAN BOY. Roman tunic of white with dark red border.

PURITAN MAID. A Puritan dress of gray, white kerchief, cap, and apron.

INDIAN BOY. Indian suit, headdress of feathers; carries a bow and arrow.

TOM. Any ordinary suit, sweater, cap, wool gloves.

THE CHRISTMAS JEST

STAGE SETTING

Scenes 1 and 3. Walls hung with dull green with armorial shields. The children may copy the little shield in the drawing at the front of the play. The shields are made of cardboard covered in black and white, the devices are cut from gold or silver paper. At the center of the back of the stage is the throne, with deep green and gold draperies. Directions for making the throne are given in "The Captured Year."

Scene 2. The walls are covered with some coarse brown material. There should be a dilapidated hearth with a very small fire. A few broken benches are the only furniture. The bed is a pile of sacks or skins on the floor.

COSTUMES

KING. A long scarlet cloak trimmed with ermine. (The ermine is made of strips of cotton batting with tiny black cloth tails sewed in. He has jerkin and tights of either very dark purple or black. A gilt paper crown.

JESTER. Suit of black and orange. A cap and bells.

GEOFFREY. A shabby jerkin and short tight trousers, torn and ragged. He has a crutch.

DAME BRANDRETH. A faded ragged peasant costume of dull color.

BEGGARS. Torn and shabby garments fashioned like the drawings.

COURT ATTENDANTS. These may be dressed as gorgeously as possible. The fashion of the garments should be medieval as shown in costume drawing.

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